

*J. 7. 19.*

*J. 8. 71*

*Liber publicus ss. et individuae Trinit.*  
**TWELVE** *Coll. Cant.*

# SERMONS.

UPON

Several Occasions.

BY

SAMUEL SCATTERGOOD,

Late Vicar of Blockley in

Worcestershire. &

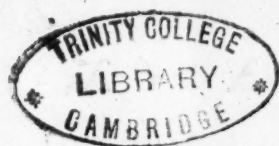
*sometime Fellow of Trinity College in Cambridge*

*J. 10. 34*

L O N D O N,

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quondam Alumni Rev<sup>ti</sup> Autoris fratris*



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TO THE  
R E A D E R.

*Courteous Reader,*

**I** Here present thee with Twelve Sermons, being Part of a greater Number which the Authour, some time before his Death, permitted me to Print. According to thy kind Acceptance of these, I may perhaps be hereafter encouraged to present thee with the Rest.

I shall not trouble thee with any Account concerning the Authour; nor offer to fore-stall thy Judgment, in commending his Works to thee:

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I shall

*To the* **R E A D E R.**

I shall onely beg of thee to believe that, if I had not great Reason to hope that thou would'st think these Sermons well worthy of thy Perusal, no private Interest could ever have induc'd me to have made them Publick.

*J. S.*

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# S E R M O N I.

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G A L. IV. 4, 5.

*But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his son made of a woman, made under the law, To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.*

**T**H E *Galatians*, unto whom *S. Paul* writes this Epistle, had in his absence been perverted and seduced from the true Doctrine of the Gospel which he had preached unto them, by some false Teachers that had crept in among them, and had perswaded them, that tho' they did believe (and that rightly) that Jesus was the true Messiah whom the Prophets foretold should come into the world, yet still it was necessary for them to be Circumcised, and to conform to the Law of *Moses* (which they thought was never to be abrogated) as well as to the Law of Christ, unto which they had so lately vowed Obedience. This Doctrine *S. Paul* confutes in this Epistle, and thunders an *Anathema* against whosoever he be

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that teaches it, though it were an Angel from Heaven. *Though we, saith he, or an Angel from heaven preach any other Gospel unto you, than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed,* chap. 1. 8. And afterwards in the close of the Epistle, he proves to them at large, that the Ceremonial Law was totally abrogated by the Law of Christ, and that by Faith in him, not only Jews, but Gentiles were the children of Abraham, and heirs of the Promise. *Know ye therefore, that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham; and the Scripture foreseeing that God would justify the Heathens through faith, preached before the Gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all Nations be blessed.* So then they which be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham, chap. 3. 7, 8, 9. And tho' indeed the Jews had most glorious Privileges and Favours conferred upon them by the bounty of God under the Mosaical Oeconomy, beyond what he had vouchsafed to any People upon earth besides (*for unto them were committed the oracles of God, and they received the Law by the disposition of Angels.* God had chosen them to be his own peculiar People, his only visible Church upon earth until the coming of the Messias: So that the Psalmist had great reason to confess, that *he had not dealt so with any Nation*) yet for all this our Apostle assures them, that how great soever these Privileges of the Jews might seem (and indeed really were) in comparison of what God had vouchsafed to other Nations, during the time of the Law, yet they were, far inferiour to those which the Church was afterwards to enjoy under the Oeconomy of the Gospel, the glorious and everlasting Kingdom of Christ: Whereupon he resembles the Law to a

School-

## Sermon First.

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*School-master which was to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith, chap. 3. 24. But, saith he, After that faith is come, we are no longer under a School-master. For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. And in the beginning of this fourth Chapter he compares the Church under the Law to an Heir in his Minority, but the Church under the Gospel to an Heir now come to Age, and in Possession of his inheritance. Now, I say, that the Heir, as long as he is a Child, differeth nothing from a Servant, though he be Lord of all; but is under Tutors and Governors, until the time appointed of the father. Even so we, when we were children, were in bondage under the Elements of the world. But when the fulness, &c.*

Thus ye see the coherence and scope of the Text; and ye cannot chuse but apprehend, at the first view of it, that it is very futable to this present Season, and that it will furnish us with excellent Matter, with a most magnificent and heavenly Feast of fit and proper Meditations, to entertain our Souls with at this great Festival, which we celebrate in Memory of the wonderful Incarnation and Nativity of our blessed Saviour. Indeed it is hard to instance in any other Text of Scripture, wherein the whole Mystery of our Saviour's Incarnation is so amply and fully explained in so few words, as it is in these which I have now made choice of for the Subject of my Discourse, which evidently contains all these important Truths. 1. Here is our Saviour's Divinity implied in these words, *God sent forth his Son.* 2. Here is his Humanity, together with the manner how he became Man, and how qualified;



*made of a woman, made under the law.* 3. The time when the blessed Son of God was thus sent forth ; it was *when the fulness of the time was come.* 4. The reason, or end, of his Mission ; it was *to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.* But though I shall, more or less, touch upon all these Points, yet for the more plainness I shall confine my self to this method : I shall prove to you, that our blessed Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ is the true Messias, whom God hath long since sent forth into the world, and that no other is to be expected : and this I shall do, as by other Arguments, so particularly by these which are mentioned in my Text, the time when, the manner how, and the reason and end wherefore he came into the world. The coming of the Messias is a matter of so great importance, that it concerns all Mankind diligently to enquire about it, and to inform themselves aright whether he be already come, or no ; and if he be, who is the true Messias, whom God hath sent into the world. For to erre in this Point, is the most fatal Error imaginable, an Error that inevitably entitles us to Damnation ; for it is most certain, that *in the Messias were all the Families of the Earth to be blessed* : and as all Mankind share in the transgression of our first Parents, by which we lost our state of Innocence, and fell into a state of Sin and Death, and became obnoxious to the wrath of God ; so hath all Mankind an interest likewise in the Messias, who hath *destroyed the works of the Devil, abolished Death, and brought life and immortality to light* ; and by vertue of this Interest every Son of Adam hath a right to God's favour, and an unquestionable Title to the Kingdom of Heaven ; if  
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he loses not this Interest, and this Title to the glorious inheritance, by unbelief. And since God was graciously pleased to shew so great Mercy to Mankind (greater than whatever he vouchsafed to any of his Creatures besides) as to reconcile them unto himself, through the Mediation of the Messias; it was necessary for him to give the world timely notice, that in his good time he would send such a person into it, who should accomplish this great work; and also to describe him so plainly, by such infallible Marks and Characters, as that the whole World might be sensible of his coming, that he might be visibly discernible from all Mankind besides; that no man might be mistaken in him, so as to adhere to a false Messias, or to reject the true one, except it were such as took little, or no care to inform themselves, or such as were wilfully obstinate, and resolved to shut their Eyes against the clearest light. And that God hath done thus, is granted even by the very enemies of Christianity. The Jews themselves acknowledge it: and indeed every man must needs do so that knows the Scriptures, and owns them to be the word of God. He declared this gracious Design of his to send the Messias even in the very beginning of the world; and no sooner had our first Parents brought themselves into a condition to need a Saviour, but God presently assures them that he hath ordained one for them, and that *the seed of the woman shall bruise the serpents head.* He declared it afterwards more plainly to *Abraham*, and the rest of the Patriarchs; more fully yet to *Moses*: And lastly, most clearly of all by the Prophets; for *to him give all the Prophets witness.* If then these things be so (as most

certainly they are) it is plain that by the Scriptures we may most evidently discern whether the Messias be already come or no ; and if he be come, who he is, that we may believe in him. And that he is already come, and that our blessed Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ is he, will be undeniably apparent from these following Arguments ; in the managing of which I shall shew you, how exactly the New Testament and the Old agree together, like two Indentures to prove this great Truth which both of them chiefly aim at, that Jesus is the Messias, or Christ, which is the same thing in another Language signifying, *Anointed*, a Person set apart and appointed by God, to a most high and eminent Office and Employment.

First then, that Jesus is the true Messias appears from his coming into the world punctually at the time, wherein God had foretold in the Scriptures of the Old Testament, that the Messias should come. So saith our Apostle here in my Text, *When the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his son*, i. e. at that juncture of time which God had appointed and foretold by his Prophets. That the coming of the Messias should be deferred for some considerable time was very reasonable ; that men might the more earnestly desire, and long for the Accomplishment of so great a Blessing : and it was as reasonable that the exact time of his coming should be pointed at, and decyphered by some remarkable Signs and Tokens ; that they might not be weary of expecting him before the time was come ; or when it was come, that they might not be unable to know him, and continue to expect another. And accordingly God hath dealt with the world : He sent not the Messias quickly

quickly (for he came not until the World was near 4000 years old) and, besides other later Prophecies of it, he punctually foretold the time when he should come near 1700 years before-hand : all which Prophecies agree exactly (even by the Jews own Confession) to the time of our Saviour's coming in the Flesh. I shall instance only in these three as being the chief and principal of them, and abundantly sufficient of themselves without the concurrence of any other to prove this Point. The first is that ancient Prophecy of *Jacob*, Gen. 49. 10. *The Sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a Lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come ; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be.* All the ancient Expositors of the Jews understand these words (as we do) to be a Prophecy of the coming of the *Messias*, called here by the name of *Shiloh*, which signifies *sent*, or, as some perhaps better interpret it, a *Peace-maker*, viz. that *the Sceptre should not depart from Judah*, i. e. that that Tribe should continue all along, without any Interruption, to be a Body politick, having a power of Government and Jurisdiction within it self, until the coming of the *Messias*, the great *Peace-maker*, whom God would send to reconcile the world unto himself. Thus far the Jews and we are agreed about the sense of this Text : But we say further, that it means not only that the Tribe of *Judah* should continue to be invested with the power of Government within it self, until the coming of the *Messias* (as it is manifest that it did, after it had once received that Power, from *David's* time until the coming of our Saviour) but that it should be deprived of this Power, and cease to be a Commonwealth soon after the coming of the *Messias* : and that

it did so about 40 years after our Saviour's Crucifixion is matter of Fact, as evident and undeniable as the other. Nay more than thus, forasmuch as it is plain in Chronology, that the Commonwealth of the Jews was not destroyed immediately upon the Birth of our Saviour, nor immediately after his Death. This Prophecy points directly at the time when that fatal Destruction should come upon them, that should wrest the Sceptre out of their hands, if we understand it as the Learned Mr. Mede doth, much more agreeably to the Original, and to the completion of it, than is our English Translation, viz. thus, *The Sceptre shall not depart from Judah until Shiloh come, and the gathering of the people be to him*: and so it is plain that this Destruction of the Jewish Polity was not to happen immediately upon the coming of the Messias; but first the people were to be gathered unto him, i. e. were to submit to his Government, and to own him for their Lord; which was fulfilled, when the Apostles had executed the Commission which our Saviour gave them, and had converted the Gentiles in all Countreys of the then known World to the Christian Faith: then immediately followed the utter Subversion of the Jewish State, as our Saviour had foretold. Matth. 24. 14 *This Gospel of the Kingdom shall be preached in all the world, for a witness unto all Nations; and then shall the end come.* Then did the Sceptre finally and totally depart from Judah, according to this ancient Prophecy of the Patriarch Jacob.

The second Prophecy which I shall instance in, to prove that our Saviour came at the time appointed by God for the coming of the Messias is Hagg. 2. 6, 7, and 9th Verses. *Thus saith the Lord*  
of



of hosts ; yet once, it is a little while, and I will shake the heavens, and the earth, and the sea, and the dry land ; and I will shake all nations, and the desire of all nations shall come : and I will fill this house with glory, saith the Lord of hosts. The glory of this latter house shall be greater than of the former, saith the Lord of hosts : and in this place will I give peace, saith the Lord of hosts. Unto which I shall joyn that of *Mal. 3. 1.* as being exactly parallel. Behold I will send my Messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me : and the Lord whom ye seek shall suddenly come to his temple, even the Messenger of the covenant whom ye delight in : behold he shall come, saith the Lord of hosts. The chief end and design of both these Prophecies is to foretel that the Messias should come while the second Temple was standing, viz. that Temple which was built by *Zerubbabel*, after that the Jews were returned from the Babylonish Captivity, and afterwards repaired and beautified by *Herod*. Thus the ancient Rabbies and Doctors of the Jews understood these Texts, as well as we, however their modern Writers now labour to wrest them to some other sense, that they may not be forced to own our Saviour to be the true Messias, at whom it is evident nevertheless, that these Texts do directly point. For whereas (as we read *Ezr. 3. 12.*) when *Zerubbabel* had begun to build this Temple, many of the ancient men among the Jews, that remembred the former Temple that was built by *Solomon*, wept, when they considered how much inferiour this would be to that ; thereupon God sends the Prophet *Haggai* to encourage them in the building of it, and to assure them, *That the glory of this latter house should be greater than of the former.* But wherein was the



the Glory of this Temple greater than that of *Solomon's*? Indeed it lasted a little the longer of the two, and but a little; not the Age of a man; for it never attain'd to be threescore and ten years older than the former. But if it had lasted twice as long, what is this to the Glory and Splendour of it? For if Glory be the product of Age, then an old Cottage is more honourable than a new Palace. And as for any other Glory, except that which it received by being honoured by the Presence of the Messias, it is certain, that in all other respects it came far short of *Solomon's* Temple. For who can with any reason suppose that a conquered Nation newly returned out of Captivity, from under the hand of a potent Enemy, should have so much Wealth and Riches as to be able to build a Temple that might vie with that of *Solomon's*, who exceeded all the Kings of the earth for riches and for wisdom? And though it be true, that *Artaxerxes* gave very large and magnificent Contributions towards the building of this second Temple, yet is it not to be imagined that *Artaxerxes* an Heathen King, either took so much care, or bestowed so much cost about the building of this Temple, as *Solomon* did about his, who according to that mighty Wisdom and Riches, with which God had blessed him, built unto the Honour of God's name, both for Cost and Workmanship, undoubtedly the stateliest Fabrick that ever the world beheld. Neither is it at all probable that *Herod*, when he rebuilt and beautified this Temple anew made it equal to *Solomon's*. But suppose it had been equal to it, or exceeded it in the Splendour and Magnificence of its building; yet it is certain And the Jews themselves acknowledge

ledge it) that it was far inferiour to it, in matters of an higher Nature. For gold and silver, and precious stones were the least part of the Glory of *Solomon's Temple*. Its greatest Glory was that God was pleased to make it the peculiar place as it were of his Residence, and especial Presence here upon Earth, *The place where his honour dwelt*, and that far more visibly and eminently, than ever it did in the second Temple before the coming of Christ. For besides that, at the Dedication of *Solomon's Temple* we read that *Fire came down in a wonderful manner from Heaven, and consumed the burnt offering and the sacrifices; and the glory of the Lord filled the house*, so that by reason of it the *Priests* were not able to enter into it; and there is no mention made of any such Miracles being shewed at the Dedication of the second; it had also the *Urim* and *Thummim*. and the Ark of the Covenant, which were signal Tokens of the Divine Presence, and from whence God was wont to give Answers to the High Priest when he came to enquire of him, both which were wanting in the second. To this we may add also the Spirit of Prophecy, so frequently manifest in the Prophets during the time of the first Temple, and ceasing all the time of the second, for about 400 years together, even from *Malachy*, the last of the Prophets in the Old Testament, until the coming of our Saviour. Since then in all these respects the Glory of the second Temple was far short of that of the former, and yet God here by his Prophet promises to make it greater; it must needs be that it was greater only by being honoured with the gracious Presence of the Messias, unto whom alone those glorious Titles mentioned in the afore-cited Prophecies

Prophecies do properly belong, *The desire of all Nations ; the Lord whom ye seek ; and the Messenger of the Covenant whom ye delight in.* And who should this Messias be but our blessed Saviour, who came while this Temple was yet standing, and foretold that it should be destroyed in the same Age, and moreover declared himself to be the Messias, and confirmed and demonstrated it by such wonders and miracles as the World never saw either before, or since. It was he therefore that rendered the second Temple truly more glorious than the first, when he taught in it such heavenly Doctrine, so far beyond any thing that had before been revealed unto the World, and filled it with *his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.*

The third Prophecy which I shall produce for the Confirmation of this point is, *Dan 9. 24. Seventy weeks are determined upon thy People, and upon thy holy City, &c.* and ver. 26. it is said, *that after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off.* Now that this Prophecy is an exact Prediction of the time when our blessed Saviour was to suffer, and also of the time of the Destruction of *Jerusalem* is the unanimous Opinion of all learned and judicious Expositors, who by the seventy weeks here mentioned understand weeks for years (*i e.*) seventy times seven years, which amounts to just 490. At the end of those years (reckoning from the timewhen the second Temple was finished) was *Jerusalem* to be destroyed, and a final period to be put to the Jewish State ; which learned Chronologers have computed to fall out accordingly (as near as can be guessed in a matter so remote from our times) almost to a day ; and the threescore and

and two weeks also when the Messiah was to be cut off, to expire exactly at the time when our Saviour was crucified. That these things were punctually fulfilled, viz. both the Crucifixion of our Saviour, and the Destruction of *Jerusalem*, according to the time foretold in this Prophecy, appears so plain in History, that it cannot be denied with any tolerable shew of reason : and therefore the Jews, since they are forced to acknowledge, that both our Saviour's Crucifixion, and the Destruction of *Jerusalem*, fell out exactly about the time foretold in this Prophecy, being thus understood, that they may not own our Saviour to be the Messiah, deny that by that word the Messiah himself is here intended, but that it means some other person ; but who that is they are by no means agreed ; some applying it to one person, and some to another, to at least five several persons amongst them, and to never a one of these with the least probability of truth, which that it is a most intolerable obstinacy appears from this one remarkable Observation, that the Messiah is no where called by his own name directly, as he is here *Messiah*, ver. 26. and more Emphatically, to prevent all mistakes, in the preceding Verse, *Messiah the Prince* in any other place, but this throughout all the Old Testament ; but only by way of Type every where else : and it is very likely that the ancient Jews before our Saviour's time, learn'd to give unto the Messiah his proper name from this very Prophecy, which they will not own now, to have any relation to him ; so strange a Power hath prejudice to pervert and blind the Hearts of men. Thus I have made it sufficiently evident by these three famous Prophecies, that of *Jacob*, that of *Haggai*,



*Haggai*, (joyntly considered together with that of *Malachy*) and this of *Daniel*, that our Saviour is the true Messias, forasmuch as he came into the world *when the fulness of the time was come*, foretold and signified by all these Prophecies, and declared himself to be the Messias, which none else did about that time, but only some few notorious Impostors, which were all quickly renounced as such, even by their own most zealous Disciples and Followers. I might prove this Truth further from several more Arguments, which I could produce out of the Old Testament for this purpose, as also from the general Opinion and Expectation which the Jews had, that the Messias should come about that very time when our Saviour was born, which no doubt was grounded upon these Prophecies which I have been handling, and others of the same Nature. And that they did at that time expect the Messias is evident, not only from their own Writers, but even from some of the Heathen Historians : for both *Suetonius* and *Tacitus* tell us, that at that time the Jews were in great Expectation of a mighty Person that should rise up amongst them, under whose Conduct and Government their Nation should flourish far beyond whatever it had done in former times, even so as to become the Head of all the World : which Opinion was their ruin in a short time afterwards, for it made them so confident, that upon this Presumption they rebelled against the *Romans* so obstinately, that at the last they were utterly destroyed by them, and their City and Temple demolished. But I have already said enough to clear this Truth, that our blessed Saviour came into the world precisely at that time, which God by his Prophets had foretold and prefixed



prefixed for the coming of the Messias, and consequently that he is the true Messias, since none other, neither about that time, nor since, ever laid claim to that Title with any probable appearance of truth; neither can any one do it hereafter, seeing that, if these Prophecies be not already fulfilled, it is now many Ages too late for the accomplishment of them: for *the fulness of the time* is long since past, and God hath already sent forth his son made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.

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## S E R M O N II.

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G A L. IV. 4, 5.

*But when the fulness of the time, &c.*

**I**N the handling of this portion of Scripture, I undertook to prove this Proposition, that our Lord Jesus Christ is the true Messias, whom God hath long since sent into the world, and none other is to be expected. This I have cleared already in one particular, *viz.* that of the time when, according to the Predictions of the Prophets in the Old Testament, the Messias was to come; which I have proved to be the very same time in which our blessed Saviour was born. *When the fulness of the time was come God sent forth his son.* Thus far therefore it is evident, that our Saviour hath a just right to the Title of the Messias, in that he appeared in the world precisely, at the time prefixed by God for the coming of the Messias. But this Circumstance alone (although without it all others would be too little) is not sufficient of it self to put this matter out of Dispute: and had we no other Argument but this for the proof of our Proposition, we should be altogether as unreasonable in believing in Jesus Christ, as the Jews are in rejecting him, when they find this one material Circumstance attended and corroborated invincibly,

cibly, beyond all Exception, with every other material and necessary Circumstance mentioned in the Old Testament, relating both to the person and office of the Messias. For it is not to be imagined, that our Saviour was the only person that was born at that time. No, without question there were thousands in the world that were born at the same instant; many of the same Tribe; perhaps some very near the time of the same Family, and in the same City: for we find in the Gospel, mention made of his brethren and kindred. This Circumstance of the time therefore, though it be absolutely necessary to prove our Proposition; yet it is not sufficient of it self, being applicable to other persons as well as to the Messias; but will most fully demonstrate it being joyned with the two other Circumstances contain'd in my Text, *viz.* the manner how our Saviour came into the World; and the reason, or end wherefore he came; which I come now to consider: In the doing of which I shall shew you first, that our blessed Saviour came into the World exactly in the same manner, in which the Prophets in the Old Testament foretold that the Messias should come; secondly, that he came for those very reasons and ends, for which the Prophets foretold that the Messias should come, and that he effected and accomplished those ends in the very same way and method that, according to the Predictions of the same Prophets, the Messias was to do.

First, I say, our blessed Saviour came into the World in the very same manner, punctually, even in every minute Circumstance, in which the Prophets foretold that the Messias should come. Our Apostle here in my Text takes notice only of these

two; that *he was made of a woman*, and that *he was made under the law*: but I shall handle this Point more largely, not confining my self to these two Particulars only, but insisting upon all the most material Circumstances that were to attend the coming of the Messias; and in so doing I shall shew that they were all fulfilled to a tittle in the manner of our Saviour's appearing in the world. Now the chief Circumstances relating to the manner of the Messias appearing in the world are these. 1. of what Tribe he was to be; 2. of what Family of that Tribe. 3. in what Town he was to be born. 4. in what Manner. 5. in what Quality and Condition. The first Circumstance to be enquired into is, of what Tribe the Messias was to be: and in this particular the Jews agree with us, that he was to be of the Tribe of *Judah*, according to *Jacob's Prophecy*, *The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet until Shiloh come*; upon which account that Tribe was by God honoured with many signal and eminent Privileges, beyond any other of the twelve Tribes of *Israel*. Now that our blessed Saviour was of this Tribe is a thing so undeniable, that the Apostle writing to the Jews takes it for granted that they all acknowledged it, without any dispute. *Hebr. 7. 14. For it is evident that our Lord sprang out of Judah*: which Expression he would never have used had it not been a thing so certain, and known to be so at the time when he wrote his Epistle, that no man could deny it. But this will appear yet more clearly from the Consideration of the second Circumstance, observable in the coming of the Messias, *viz.* of what Family he was to be: and that was of the Family of *David*,

*David*, who it is most certain was of the Tribe of *Judah*. And this was so plainly and frequently foretold by the Prophets, that the Jews themselves never made any question of it, but do even unto this day expect that their imaginary *Messias*, whom they yet look for, shall arise out of the Family of *David*. This Promise God made unto *David*, and confirmed it with his Oath. *Psal.* 89. 35. *Once have I sworn by my holiness, that I will not lie unto David. His seed shall endure for ever, and his throne as the sun before me. It shall be established for ever as the moon, and as the faithful witness in heaven.* So *Isa.* 11. 1. *There shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots: and the spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, &c.* And ver 10. *There shall be a root of Jesse, which shall stand for an Ensign of the people; to it shall the Gentiles seek: and his rest shall be glorious.* By these Texts, together with several others to the same purpose, the Jews were fully convinced of this Truth, that the *Messias* was to be of the Family of *David*; insomuch that they used that Expression of *the son of David* to signify the *Messias*, unto whom in a peculiar and eminent manner it properly belonged, as appears by the Acclamations of the multitudes that attended our Saviour, when he rode in triumph to *Jerusalem*, *Crying, Hosanna to the son of David*, *Matth.* 21. 9 And in the next Chapter, ver. 42. when our Saviour asks the *Pharisees* this question, *What think ye of Christ? whose son is he?* They readily answer him, without any scruple, *The son of David*; though they could not so readily answer him the next question, *How then doth David in spirit call him Lord, saying, The Lord said unto*



*my Lord, sit thou on my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy footstool.* Thus then it is plain, that the Messias was to be the Son of *David*: and it is as plain, that our blessed Saviour whom we believe to be the Messias was the Son of *David*: for *S. Matthew* gives an account of his Genealogy from *Abraham*; and *S. Luke* proceeds farther, and reckons it even from *Adam* himself: and that both these Evangelists were faithful in the account that they have given us of it is manifest, in that the Jews never offered to find any flaw or errour in it; which certainly they would have done, if there had been any such failure to have been found, and have made the whole World acquainted with it. But by the providence of God, until the coming of the Messias, the Genealogies of the Jews were so carefully recorded and preserved, for this very reason, that it might be apparent, when the Messias did come, that he was of the Family of *David*, according to the Predictions of the Prophets, that there could be no dispute about this Point. This is the second Circumstance observable in the manner of the Messias his coming into the World, he was to be the Son of *David*; and so was our Saviour. The next is the place where he was to be born. And herein the Jews agree with us again, that, according to the Predictions of the Prophets, the Messias was to be born in *Bethlehem*. For so we read, *Mic. 5. 2* *But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah; yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me, that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting.* Now that the Jews did expect the Messias should be born in that City is plain, from the answer which the Scribes



Scribes and chief Priests gave to *Herod*, when being troubled at the News which the wise men of the East brought him, of a King being born unto the Jews, he enquired of them where Christ should be born; they answered with one accord, *In Bethlehem of Judea*, grounding their answer upon this Prediction of the Prophet *Micah*. And so *Joh. 7. 42.* when the people were divided in their Opinions concerning our Saviour, and many said, *Of a truth this is the Prophet.* Others said, *This is the Christ.* But some said (perhaps not knowing where our Saviour was born, or else maliciously pretending not to know it) *shall Christ come out of Galilee? Hath not the Scripture said, that Christ cometh of the seed of David, and out of the Town of Bethlehem, where David was?* By these passages it appears, that the Jews did unanimously confess and acknowledge that the Messias, or Christ, was to be born in *Bethlehem*. And that our blessed Saviour was born there, both *S. Matthew* and *S. Luke* have fully assured us. The manner and occasion of his being born there is most punctually recorded by the latter: and it will be worth our while to take a short view of it, being a thing wonderfully effected by the secret and over-ruling Providence of God, contrary to all likelihood and probability, that the prediction of the Prophet concerning this matter might be fulfilled. For had not our Saviour been born in *Bethlehem*, the Jews had then had an invincible Argument against us, to prove him not to be the Messias. And that he should be born there was very unlikely, until within a few days before it came to pass. For both *Joseph* and the blessed Virgin *Mary* dwelt together at *Nazareth*, about twenty Miles from *Bethlehem*, from the

time, when at the Salutation of the Angel *Gabriel*, she conceived our Saviour, until the time of her Delivery was at hand, excepting only those three Months which she spent with her Cousin *Elizabeth* in the Hilly Countrey, from whence we read expressly, that she *returned to her own house*, Luk. 1. 56. In all probability therefore, our Saviour was likely to be born at *Nazareth*, had not God unexpectedly ordered the matter otherwise : which accordingly he did. For when her full time drew near, by a Decree of *Augustus Caesar*, both *Joseph* and she (no doubt much against their Wills, as not being then very able to undertake a Journey) are constrained to go to be taxed in the Town belonging to their Family, which was *Bethlehem*. And so it was, saith S. Luke, that while they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered. And she brought forth her first-born son, and wrapped him in swadling clothes, and laid him in a manger ; because there was no room for them in the Inn, Luk. 2. 6, 7. Thus did God in his great Wisdom order this matter so, that (all the Family of *David* being called together at the same time, as it were on purpose to be Witnesses of our Saviour's Birth) we might not want sufficient evidence to prove, that our blessed Lord was not only born of the House of *David*, but also in the Town of *Bethlehem*. The next Circumstance to be considered in the coming of the *Messias* is the manner of his Birth ; and this was to be wonderful : for he was to be born of a pure Virgin, a thing which never did, nor ever shall, happen to any man in the World besides. This was foretold by the Prophet *Isaiah*, chap. 7. 14. Behold a Virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name *Immanuel* ; which,

which, as *S. Matthew* tells us, being interpreted, is, *God with us*, and that in a peculiar and miraculous manner, so as he never was with any other Creature but man; with us by a personal, and eternal Union. Now that this is an expresse Prophecy of the Birth of the Messias, is so clear that it affords no tolerable grounds for any Objections to be made against it. For unto whom can that great name *Immanuel* properly belong, but unto that ever blessed Person, that was to mediate betwixt God and Man, and reconcile them together? Or upon whom can we imagine that God would bestow the honour of such a Birth, if not upon the Messias, who was undoubtedly to be honoured with far more glorious Privileges than any other of the Sons of men besides? Since then God by his Prophet did foretel that such a wonder as this should be effected, that *a Virgin should conceive and bear a son*, we cannot with any probability imagine that any other person should be so born but only the Messias. And that he is here meant, is yet more fully evident from the Character which the Prophet gives of him afterwards, Chap. 9. 6. *Unto us a child is born, unto us a Son is given, and the government shall be upon his shoulders, and his name shall be called, Wonderful Counsellor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace.* These high Titles can be applied to no other person but to the Messias; which is yet more clear by what follows in the next Verse. *Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice, from henceforth even for ever.* Certainly none other person but the Messias was to sit for ever up-

on the Throne of *David*, even by the Confession of the Jews themselves. It is true, that there is not any one thing in all the Gospel which the Jews are more unwilling to believe than this, that our Saviour came into the world by such a miraculous Birth as this, this one Circumstance being in a manner of it self sufficient to convince any reasonable person that whosoever was so born could be none else but the Messias : And therefore, rather than they will give credit to it, they deny that either in this place, or any other in the Old Testament, God ever foretold that the Messias should be born of a pure Virgin ; whereby they rob him of one of the highest and most honourable Privileges that God bestowed upon him upon Earth. And for proof of this, against all sense and reason, they affirm that the Hebrew word in this Prophecy, which we translate *Virgin*, doth not always signifie so ; but is sometimes used for a married Woman ; and that it ought to be so rendered in this place. Which is a most malicious and false Assertion, and contains two notorious errors and absurdities, the one visible only to the Learned, the other easily discernible by men of ordinary Capacities. For first, learned Men, that are as well acquainted with the Hebrew Tongue as the Jews themselves, have evidently made it appear, that wheresoever this word occurs in any other place of the Old Testament it always signifies a pure and undefiled Virgin ; and no tolerable reason can be given, why it may not signifie so in this place as well as in all the rest ; nay on the contrary very great reason may be given, why in this place above all others it may, and must of necessity signifie a Virgin as well as elsewhere, forasmuch

as otherwise this Prophecy will be made downright Nonsense ; which is the second absurdity contained in this Assertion of the Jews, which I say is obvious enough to be discerned by an ordinary Capacity. For this Prophecy was delivered upon this occasion ; *Abaz* King of *Judah* being much afraid of the Kings of *Syria* and *Samaria* that were coming to war against him, God sends the Prophet *Isaiah* to comfort him, and to assure him that they shall not prevail against him, and withal gives him leave to ask some great Sign to be given him, to satisfy him that God would certainly protect him, which when he refused to do (*I will not ask, saith he, neither will I tempt the Lord*) God himself most graciously promises to give him a Sign ; *therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign.* And surely if God pleases to give a Sign he will give such a one as is worthy of himself, one that is exceedingly wonderful and extraordinary. But after all, as the Jews would interpret the Text, the Sign only to be this. *Behold a woman shall conceive and bear a son.* What Sign, what Wonder is there in this ? Certainly no more than what is to be seen every day, every hour, every minute in one place or other in the world. If therefore we interpret the Text thus, it is not reconcileable to Sense. But as our Translation renders it (*Behold a Virgin shall conceive and bear a son*) this is a Wonder indeed, such as the world never did, nor ever shall, behold, but once ; this is an astonishing Sign, worthy of God to give, and a Prerogative so eminent as none else but the Messiah was worthy to receive. Now that our blessed Saviour was born of a pure Virgin, is a thing so clearly revealed and firmly attested by persons of  
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unquestionable Fidelity and Integrity, authorized and commissioned by God himself to give the world a true account of these matters, and guided and assisted by his Spirit in the doing of it, that it can be denied by nothing less obstinate than the same malice which would pervert the sense of that famous Prophecy which foretold it. That the Evangelists and Apostles have given us this account of the Birth of our Saviour is so well known, that I need not insist upon it; and to prove that their Writings are the word of God, and consequently that they are most certainly and infallibly true, is beyond my present Purpose, which is to shew that there is not any one Prophecy in the Old Testament concerning the Messias which we find not punctually fulfilled, even to the least tittle, in the person of our Saviour in that account, which the Evangelists have given us of him, which sufficiently demonstrates him to be the true Messias, and their Writings to be of Divine Authority. This manner of our Saviour's Birth is very emphatically expressed by our Apostle in my Text. *God sent forth his son made of a woman.* As he is God he is not made, but begotten of the Father by an eternal and unspeakable Generation; and as he is Man he was not begotten, but made of a woman after an unconceivable manner, by the omnipotent Power of God. And thus it was necessary, that the Messias should make his Entry into the world, who was to be conceived and born without sin, sanctified from the Womb, *holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners.* Thus much of the fourth Circumstance relating to the manner of the Messias his appearing in the world. He was to be born of a Virgin; and so was our Saviour.

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The next thing to be considered, is in what Quality and Condition he was to come. This is that grand Stumbling-block at which the Jews are irreconcilably scandalized. They are very ready to acknowledge that our Saviour appeared in the world in a very poor and despicable State, and thus far they believe the Gospel as well as we : but because he did appear in such a Condition they utterly deny him to be the Messias, whom they still expect to come with exceeding great Pomp and Splendour, and Glory becoming so great a King as was to sit for ever upon the Throne of *David*, and to subdue all the Nations of the Earth, and to reduce them to his obedience. Had our Saviour come in this manner, and made their Nation the head of the World, it is more than probable that this one Circumstance would have fully satisfied them, and without any scrupulous Enquiry of what Tribe he was born, of what Family, in what Place, and in what manner they would have unanimously proclaimed him to be the true Messias, the Son of *David*, and the redeemer of *Israel*. But that a person of so mean and obscure a Birth as our Saviour was, one, who as to his external Condition, made so inconsiderable a figure in the world, that the Carpenter the Son of *Mary* (as they scornfully called him) should declare himself to be the greatest of all the Sons of men, their so long expected, and earnestly desired Messias, the Son of God, and the King of *Israel*; they lookt upon to be so great an affront to their Nation; that instead of owning him to be the Messias, they reject him as an Impostor, and cut him off by an ignominious Death, little knowing that in all this they fulfilled the Scriptures, and that their very opposition,

sition, rejection, and Crucifixion of him were all necessary and material Arguments, which we could by no means have wanted, to prove him to be the true Messias. Since then we cannot deny that our blessed Saviour did come into the world in a poor and mean Condition, far different from that wherein the Jews expected the Messias should appear; in such a Condition indeed in which humane Reason, would little imagine that God would send into the world his only begotten Son, the Son of his eternal Love, in whom he is well pleased, him who was to be so highly exalted, *and to have a name given him above every name.* For all the world as well as the Jews might very reasonably expect that such a person as this would come attended with the most pompous and magnificent Circumstances imaginable, suitable to the Grandeur and Glory of him who was to be *higher than the Kings of the earth*; it concerns us above all other Circumstances relating to the coming of the Messias, firmly and substantially to prove this, which of all others seems to be the most improbable, that he was to come in this mean and contemptible Condition. For since it is manifest from the Writings of the Prophets ~~that~~ *that the Messias was to be a most mighty King, of the increase of whose Government and Peace there should be no end upon the throne of David and upon his Kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice for ever*; if this great person was to be born of mean Parents, in a Stable, and afterwards all his life time to continue in a Condition answerable to that obscure Birth; not to enjoy so much as an house of his own wherein to hide his head; to be despised and hated by his own Countrymen,

treymen, and persecuted unto Death; it was necessary that God by his Prophets should foretel this also; or else it could never have been expected that when he did come, any Man living should have been able to discern him in so strange a Disguise, God having no where revealed any such thing. But if God hath revealed this also, as clearly as any of the aforementioned Circumstances, and hath by his Prophets as plainly foretold the Humiliation of the Messias, as his Exaltation; then it is evident that our Saviour's coming in that mean Condition, in which we confess he did, is so far from being any Objection against us, that, joyned with the former Circumstances, and with what I shall further insist upon, it is an unanswerable Argument to prove that he is the true Messias; seeing he came exactly in such a Quality and Condition, as God by his Prophets foretold the Messias should come in. And that God did foretel that the Messias should appear in this low and despicable State, besides other places of Scripture, we have the whole 53d. Chap. of the Prophecy of *Isaiah* to convince us; which of all others is the most full and plain Prophecy, both of the Humiliation and Exaltation of Christ. And it is a wonderful thing that the Jews even to this day should continue so obstinate as not to believe it; though this very obstinacy and unbelief of theirs is a very strong Confirmation of our Faith, since even this also is expressly foretold by the Prophet, and that in the very first words of the Chapter: He ushers in his Prophecy with an admiration at the stupidity and unbelief of his People, who he foresaw would not receive it. *Who hath believed our report? And to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?*

And

And then in the two following Verses he gives an exact Description of this mean Condition in which the Messias was to come. *He shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground ; he hath no form nor comeliness : and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him. He is despised and rejected of men ; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief : and we hid as it were our faces from him : he was despised, and we esteemed him not.* Now if this be truly (as we affirm it is) a Prophecy of the Messias, it is manifest, that it agrees exactly with the manner of our Saviour's appearing in the world. And though the modern Jews deny it to be a Prophecy of him, yet we have sufficient Arguments to prove that it is. I shall instance only in these two. First it is very unreasonable to imagine, that God would suffer every punctilio of this Prophecy to be completely accomplished and fulfilled, in the person of one who owned and declared himself to be the Messias, except the Prophecy were really intended of the Messias, and he in whom it was so fulfilled, were that very person whom it meant. Now that there is not one tittle of this Prophecy which was not fulfilled in the person of our Saviour, who professed himself to be the Messias, and applied this Prophecy to himself, is evident in the account the Evangelists have given us of him : and then it follows, not only that this is a Prophecy of the Messias, but also that our Saviour is the Messias whom it points at. The second Argument to prove this to be a Prophecy of the Messias is the unanimous Opinion of many of the ancient Rabbies and Doctors of the Jews before, and about, our Saviour's time, who all acknowledge  
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this whole Chapter, together with the latter end of the former; to be a Prophecy of the Messias. And therefore, if the modern Jews will not acknowledge as much, they differ as much from their own Writers as from us; and no reason can be assigned for their so doing, but their obstinate prejudice, that will not suffer them to apply any passage of Scripture to the Messias, that seems to be inconsistent with worldly Pomp and Grandeur. Thus I have proved to you, that our blessed Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ is the true Messias from these two Circumstances, the time when he came into the world, and the manner how. The same truth may be yet further evinced from the reason and end of his coming; but this I shall leave until another opportunity.

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## S E R M O N III.

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G A L. IV. 4, 5.

*But when the fulness of the time, &c.*

**Y**E may remember that when formerly I began to handle this portion of Scripture, I laid down this Proposition as the Foundation of my Discourse, That our blessed Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ is the true Messias, whom God hath long since sent forth into the world; and that none other is to be expected. This I undertook to prove chiefly by these Arguments with which the Apostle furnishes us here in my Text, taken from the Consideration of the time when, the manner how, and the end wherefore he came into World. The two former of these Circumstances (the time when, and the manner how, our Saviour came into the World) I have already handled; and in the doing of it have sufficiently cleared the truth of this Proposition, That our Lord Jesus Christ is the true Messias: but to make it yet more evident, there remains one Circumstance more to be considered; and that is the reason and end of his coming, which the Apostle comprises in these words, *To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.*

It was not for nothing that so great a person as the Messias was to come into the World. No, he had a mighty work to do, which none was able to perform but himself: for he was to interpose betwixt the Divine Vengeance and Sin, which is its proper Object; to redeem all Mankind from the Curse of the Law, to which we were become obnoxious, and to reconcile us again unto God, and to purchase for us the adoption of Sons. This was a work worthy of the Messias, and what the Scriptures plainly foretold that he should accomplish: and that he might effect it, it was necessary, First, That he should most fully and clearly reveal to us the whole Will of God concerning us, and that he should instruct and teach us how to behave our selves acceptably in his sight: Secondly, That he should make an atonement for our Sins, and satisfy the Justice of God incensed against us, by our Disobedience: And thirdly, That he should assist and defend us against all the attempts of our spiritual Enemies, and furnish us with means sufficient for the working out our Salvation. And accordingly we find him represented in the Scriptures of the Old Testament, sometimes as a Prophet that should in a more eminent manner, than any that ever were before, or shall be after him, publish and declare the Will of God. This God himself foretold unto *Moses*, and by him unto all *Israel*. Deut. 18. 18. *I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee, and will put my words in his mouth, and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him. And it shall come to pass, that whosoever will not hearken unto my words which he shall speak in my Name, I will require it of him.* Sometimes we find him represented as a

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Priest that should make an atonement for the Sins of his People. So Psal. 110. 4. *The Lord hath sworn, and will not repent, thou art a Priest for ever after the order of Melchisedeck.* And wherein his priestly Office chiefly consisted the Prophet *Isaiah* informs us (chap. 53.) He was to pour out his soul unto death, to be an offering for sin; to be numbred with the transgressours; to bear the sin of many; and to make intercession for the transgressours. And sometimes we find him to be represented as a King reigning with sovereign Power and Authority in a Kingdom that should have no end. So Psal. 2. 6, 8. *Yet have I set my King upon my holy hill of Sion. Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession.* Thus it was necessary, that the *Messias* should be qualified in order to the accomplishing the great Work of our Redemption. Since by Nature we are utterly ignorant of the Will of God, and destitute of all saving Knowledge, it was necessary that he should be a Prophet sent from Heaven to reveal it unto us. Since by Sin we were become Enemies unto God, it was necessary that he should be a Priest, to make Reconciliation and Intercession for us. And since we were to engage in a dangerous War, to fight against Principalities and Powers, Adversaries far stronger and mightier than our selves, that with all their force continually withstand us in our way to Heaven, and that had already enslaved us all under their accursed Tyranny by the Disobedience of our first Parents; it was necessary that he should be a mighty King, endued with Power from on high, to assert our Liberty, and to subdue and discomfit our Enemies before

before us. All these Qualifications, I say, were necessarily required in the Messias, and all are expressly ascribed unto him in the Old Testament : Now that our blessed Saviour did come into the World for this very end, for which the Prophets foretold that the Messias should come, and that he was most eminently qualified in the same manner as they foretold he should be, is most clearly evident in the account which the holy Evangelists and Writers of the New Testament have given us of him.

First he came for that very end for which the Messias was to come, which (as the Prophet *Daniel* speaks) was to *finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness*; which is the same in effect which the Apostle saith here, in my Text, *To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons*. That this was the end of our Saviour's coming, not only my Text, but almost every page of the New Testament assures us. *The son of man, saith our Saviour of himself, is come to seek and to save that which was lost*, Luk. 19. 10. and Matth. 20. 28. *The son of man came not to be ministred unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many*. *There is one God, and one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time*, 1 Tim. 2. 5, 6. I need not insist any more upon this Point, than which nothing is more evident in all the Scriptures. For *this is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners*. The end of all his Sermons, of all his Miracles, of his most holy Life and heavenly Doctrine, of his most meritorious



Death and Passion, of his most glorious and triumphant Resurrection and Ascension into Heaven, of his most gracious Mission of the Holy Ghost, and of his continual Intercession for us at the right hand of God, *was that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.* Thus ye see the end of our blessed Saviour's coming into the world, is both by himself and his Apostles plainly declared to be the very same for which the Messiah was to come. But still this is not sufficient: for one that was but an Impostor might impudently avouch himself to be the Messiah, and go about to persuade the world that he came for this very end. But it was necessary that he that did come for it indeed, and did truly accomplish it, should bring with him, as it were, credential Letters from Heaven, to assure the world that he was truly and really sent by God upon so great an Embassy. And that he did do so is evident beyond all Contradiction in the Gospel. All those eminent Offices which the Prophets in the Old Testament ascribe unto the Messiah, he undertook and performed to a tittle, and was both a Prophet, a Priest, and a King in all respects incomparably beyond what ever the world either did or shall behold.

First he was a *Prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people.* His Doctrine was most Divine and Heavenly, far surpassing what had been formerly delivered by *Moses* and the Prophets, and agreeable to what they foretold should be delivered by the Messiah. Though it is most true, that the Religion which was taught by *Moses* and the Prophets had God himself for its Author, and therefore could not chuse but be good; yet it is  
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certain that it was a far more imperfect Revelation of the Divine Will, than what was afterwards to be made by the Messias, who was to establish a Religion, unto which not only the Jews, but all mankind should be obliged to submit, or perish upon their refusal of it. For the proof of this I might produce many places out of the Writings of the Prophets; but the beginning of *Isa. 42.* shall suffice for all. *Behold my servant, whom I uphold; mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth: I have put my spirit upon him; he shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles. He shall not cry, nor lift up, nor cause his voice to be heard in the street. A bruised reed shall he not break, and the smoking flax shall he not quench: He shall bring forth judgment unto truth. He shall not fail nor be discouraged, till he have set judgment in the earth: and the isles shall wait for his law.* By this one passage, which is a plain Prophecy of the Messias, it is manifest that he was to be the greatest Prophet that ever should come into the world; an Elect and chosen Servant of God, in whom he delighted in a peculiar manner, above all the rest of Mankind; one upon whom he would pour out his Spirit without measure, and anoint with the oyl of gladness above his fellows; one that was not only to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved of Israel, but was also to be a light to the Gentiles, and salvation unto the end of the earth, filling it all, even the Isles as well as the Continent, full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea. Now that our blessed Saviour was such a Prophet as this, far greater than all the Prophets of the Old Testament, even than Moses himself, is manifest in the Evangelical History, both from the Doctrine which as a Pro-

phet he taught, and from the Miracles which as a Prophet he wrought for the Confirmation of it. As for his Doctrine, whosoever reads it must needs acknowledge that it contains a far more perfect and full Revelation of the Divine Will, than what was delivered by *Moses* and the Prophets, in regard both of Commands and Promises. All his Precepts and Commands were such as highly became the infinite goodness of God to give unto us, for the refining and perfecting our Nature, and fitting us to partake of that Happiness for which he designed us. All those seemingly venial Vices and Imperfections connived at in the Mosaical Law were made capital Crimes, and strictly forbidden, upon pain of Damnation, by the Law of Christ. All the false Glosses, and corrupt Doctrines of the Scribes and Pharisees, he hath utterly rejected and condemned as gross Hypocrisie: and by his Law *whosoever looks on a woman to lust after her* is already become an adulterer; who so hastily reproaches his Brother as a Fool doth thereby bring himself in Danger of Hell-fire; he that hates his Brother is a murderer; he that loves not his Enemy is guilty of an high breach of Christian Charity, even so as to deprive himself of the love of God. In a word, he hath commanded us to be perfect, even as our Father which is in heaven is perfect, not only with outward, but with inward Purity: for his Law reaches not only our Hands, but our Tongues, and our Hearts; and he hath told us expressly that not only for our Actions, but also for every idle word, and every sinful thought, we shall give an account at the Day of Judgment. And as the Precepts and Commands of our Saviour far exceed those of *Moses* and the Prophets, so

so likewise hath he enforced the performance of them with the Promise of a far more glorious Reward to the obedient, and the threatening of a far more dreadful Punishment to the Transgressors, than any mentioned in the Law of *Moses*. And all this he did with far greater Authority, as one that was impowered with a higher Commission, than *Moses* and the Prophets. Whatsoever they taught, they taught in the name of God, ushering in their words with this Preface, *Thus saith the Lord* : but our blessed Saviour, though what he taught was most truly the Word and Will of God, which he was sent into the world to reveal unto us ; yet, as one that knew that in him, it *was no robbery to be equal with God*, he delivers it not in God's Name, but in his own ; *I say unto you*, throughout all the Gospels. And as our Saviour's Doctrine surpasses that of *Moses* in its Excellency and Purity ; so doth it likewise in its Extent and Universality : and whereas the Law of *Moses* was published only to the Children of *Israel*, that of Christ extends it self to all Mankind, wheresoever dispersed over the face of the whole Earth, *Goye*, saith he to his Apostles, *into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature*, Mark 16. 15. And that nothing might be wanting to satisfy us, that he was indeed a Prophet sent by God on purpose, in his Name, and by his Authority, to teach this Doctrine, he confirmed and ratified it with the broad Seal of Heaven, with innumerable and most astonishing Miracles, than which, greater or more certain Testimony God himself cannot give us for the Confirmation of any Truth. These Miracles of his were so many and so wonderful, that more could not be expected from the Messiah, by the

Confession of many of the Jews that believed on him: *When Christ cometh, say they, will he do more miracles than these which this man hath done?* Joh. 7. 31. Even the Rulers of the Jews themselves, as well as the common People were convinced that he did work Miracles; and for that very reason they conspired against him, and put him to Death, as we read they did upon his raising of *Lazarus* from the Dead. Joh. 11. 47. *Then gathered the chief Priests and Pharisees a council, and said, What do we? for this man doth many miracles. If we let him thus alone, all men will believe on him: and the Romans shall come and take away both our place and nation.* To these Miracles we may add also his Predictions of future Events, very strange and unexpected; and yet all punctually fulfilled to a tittle, in the very same manner and order as he foretold they should be. All these things (which I only name, presuming them to be well known to all that live within the sound of the Gospel) evidently demonstrate our blessed Saviour to be far the greatest Prophet that ever came into the world; even such an one as all the Prophets before him foretold that the Messiah should be.

And as he was a Prophet, so he was also a Priest, as eminent in that Office as in the other, Superior to all those of the Aaronical Priesthood, even to *Aaron* himself, who, as well as his Successors; was but a Type of our great High-Priest Jesus Christ. And that he was such a Priest as this is frequently declared in the New Testament, and most clearly demonstrated by his performing the Offices belonging to such a Priest, which are especially these two. First to offer up unto God a most ho-  
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ly, perfect, and sufficient Sacrifice, to satisfy his Justice, and to make an atonement for the Sins of all Mankind. Secondly, to appear continually in the Presence of God, making most powerful and effectual Intercession for all true Believers. That he hath already performed one of these Offices, and that he doth still perform the other, we are assured by all the holy Pen-men, whose business it was to give us a true and faithful account of these matters. First, he hath offered up unto God such a Sacrifice as he himself required, with which his Justice is fully satisfied, and his Wrath appeased. And this was that Oblation of himself, of his own most precious Body and Blood, when *he poured out his soul unto death, to be an offering for sin, upon the Altar of the Cross.* *Christ, being come an High-Priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building, neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood, entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us,* Hebr. 9. 11, 12. And, without looking any further, that one Epistle to the *Hebrews* may satisfy us in this Point, the main Design of it being to convince the Jews that Jesus Christ was such an High-Priest as we are speaking of, *Who was once offered to bear the sins of many; and who shall appear unto them that look for him the second time without sin unto salvation.* Secondly, as our blessed Saviour hath offered this holy, spotless, and most acceptable Sacrifice of himself unto God for us, so doth he likewise continually intercede for us at his right hand, pleading the merits of his most precious Death and Passion in our behalf, that we thereby may be delivered from the Curse  
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of the Law, and receive the adoption of Sons. *Christ is not entred into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true, but into heaven it self, now to appear in the presence of God for us, Hebr. 9. 24. and Hebr. 7. 25. He tells us, That he is able to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them. So Rom. 8. 34. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us. And if any man sin, saith S. John, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous, 1 Joh. 2. 1.* Thus then it is evident, that our blessed Saviour is by the holy Evangelists and Apostles (that have given us a true and faithful account of him) represented to be, as great an High-Priest as it was possible that the Messias could be; for who can be higher than he that is set down at the right hand of God?

And this naturally brings me to the Consideration of his last and highest Office, which is that of a King: For surely he that is exalted unto the right hand of God, can be no less than a King in the highest Degree, a King of Saints and Angels a King of Kings, and Lord of Lords. Let the Jews perswade themselves what they please concerning the greatness of the Kingdom of their imaginary Messias, whom they fondly dream is yet to come into the world, though they cannot deny that the time prefixed for his coming by the Prophets is long since past, yet a greater King they cannot imagine him to be than we know, and are fully assured by the unanimous Testimony of most faithful and unexceptionable Witnesses, that our  
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bleſſed Saviour already is ; who is, and ever ſhall be, a *King upon Gods holy hill of Sion*, whom he hath exalted, and ſet at his own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality and power, and might and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but alſo in that which is to come, and put all things under his feet, and given him to be the head over all things to the Church, Eph. 1. 20, 21, 22. That our bleſſed Saviour was to be ſuch a King as this the Angel *Gabriel* expreſſly foretold to the *Virgin Mary* at his Conception, Luk. 1. 31. *Behold, thou ſhalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a ſon, and ſhalt call his name Jeſus. He ſhall be great, and ſhall be called the ſon of the higheſt : and the Lord God ſhall give unto him the throne of his father David. And he ſhall reign over the houſe of Jacob for ever ; and of his Kingdom there ſhall be no end.* Which words plainly imply that he was not to be a temporal King, a King of this World, whoſe Kings and Kingdoms ſhall all periſh and come to an end ; but a ſpiritual King of a Kingdom which is everlaſting. Such a King as this our Lord owned himſelf to be. *I appoint unto you a Kingdom*, ſaith he to his Diſciples, *as my father hath appointed unto me ; that ye may eat and drink at my table in my Kingdom, and ſit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Iſrael*, Luk. 22. 29, 30. A King even *Pilate* himſelf ſeemed poſitively to declare him by the Superſcription upon his Croſs, *Jeſus of Nazareth the King of the Jews* ; which he would by no means alter at the requeſt of the chief Priests. Such a King he moſt powerfully demonſtrated himſelf to be by his triumphant Reſurrection from the Dead. Such a King he yet more fully proved

proved himself to be by his most glorious Ascension into Heaven. Having first told his Disciples that *all power is given unto him in heaven and in earth*, he shews them the truth of it by ocular Demonstration, visibly in their sight ascending up into Heaven, to take Possession of his eternal Kingdom; sending moreover two Angels to comfort them, and assure them that he, *the same Jesus, which was taken up from them into heaven, shall so come in like manner as they had seen him go into heaven*, Act. i. 11. And after all this, according to his Promise, as a King that was *ascended on high, that had led captivity captive, and received gifts for men*, he bestows upon them a gift fit for the King of Heaven, to bestow upon his choicest Favourites, even that of the Holy Ghost upon the Day of Pentecost, thereby, to the astonishment of all that beheld them, empowering them to work Miracles and to speak with Tongues, in order to the accomplishing that great work about which he employed them; which was to proclaim him over all the World to be such a King, such a Saviour, and to gather him a Church out of all the Nations of the Earth, declaring that unto all those that will believe and obey him, and receive him for their Sovereign Lord and King, he will most assuredly be *the author of eternal salvation*, having redeemed them from the Curse of the Law, and purchased for them *the adoption of sons*; and that, when at the last day he shall come again in the Glory of his Father, to judge the world in righteousness, he shall then as an omnipotent King, whose Power nothing can resist, execute Vengeance upon all his Enemies, and reward all his faithful and obedient Subjects with everlasting Felicity, receiving

ceiving them into his heavenly Kingdom, there to Reign together with him in Glory, *as Kings and Priests unto God for ever* ; thus I have proved to you I hope beyond all Contradiction (except such as proceeds from wilful and obstinate Malice, or notorious Ignorance or Prejudice, which must needs be weak and groundless) that our blessed Saviour is the true Messias, whom God hath long since sent forth into the World, and that none other is to be expected by us : and this I have done according to my propounded method, chiefly by those Arguments with which my Text furnishes us, taken from the Consideration of the time when, the manner how, and the reason and end wherefore he came into the World : And in the doing of it I have insisted more or less upon all the material Circumstances mentioned by the Prophets, as it were so many infallible Notes and Characters, by which the Messias was to be known and discerned from all the rest of Mankind, and shewed you that every one of them is exactly fulfilled to a title, in the person of our Saviour ; and that it is absolutely impossible, that they ever should agree to any other person whatsoever, the time prefixed by God for the coming of the Messias being long since past ; so that it is now beyond the Power of Omnipotence it self to recal it. If then our blessed Saviour be the true Messias whom God, out of his great love to Mankind, hath sent into the World to reconcile it unto himself, *redeem us from the Curse of the Law, that we might receive the adoption of sons, and that whosoever believes in him should not perish, but have everlasting life*, woe be to all those that receive him not as such *How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation? For there is none other*  
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*name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved, but that of the Lord Jesus Christ. In him therefore let us stedfastly believe, committing the keeping of our souls unto him in well-doing, as unto a faithful Redeemer that is both mighty and willing to save us ; owning him to be our great Prophet, that hath revealed unto us the whole Will of God, by our firm Belief of all his Divine Doctrine; owning him to be our great High Priest, who, by the Sacrifice of himself once offered, hath made an atonement for our Sins, and ever liveth to make Intercession unto God for us, by our relying wholly upon his merits for Salvation : owning him to be our Sovereign, our Almighty Lord and King, able to defend and protect us in this World, and to reward us in the next, by yielding a constant, impartial and universal Obedience to all his most holy Laws and Commandments. Thus if we own him here before men, he will hereafter own us before his Father which is in Heaven ; and, when those that have rejected him shall be covered with eternal Shame and Confusion, blacker than that darkness into which they must be for ever banished from the Presence of the Lord, he shall cloath us with the glorious Robe of his own righteousness, and admit us into the everlasting Happiness of his heavenly Kingdom, to those Pleasures which are at God's right hand for evermore.*

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## S E R M O N IV.

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1 COR. VI. 20.

*For ye are bought with a price : therefore glorifie God in your body, and in your spirit, which are Gods.*

**I**Ngratitude is a Crime so base and unnatural, so repugnant to the Dictates of reason, that no Man of a generous Spirit can endure to be guilty of it. The slightest Favour we receive from any of our Friends, if it proceed from an hearty Intention to do us good, deserves at least our kind acceptance and thanks. But such a Signal and extraordinary Obligation may be laid upon us even by an earthly Benefactor, that we can do no less than devote our lives and fortunes to his Service, and think it little enough for an acknowledgment of his kindness. But still the greatest Benefits that we can receive from the hand of Man, are nothing in comparison of the least of those which we receive daily from the hand of God, from whom alone comes *every good and perfect gift*. Every Favour of his is inestimable ; that we breath his Air, that we drink his Water, that we tread upon his Earth, that we feed upon his Creatures, that we behold his Light, that he created us and brought  
us

us out of the dark Abyſs, when before we had no Being, and that he ſtill preſerves and proteſts us : theſe Mercies ſufficiently declare, that all that we have, all that we are (except what we made our ſelves by ſin) we have and are from him ; and that therefore he moſt juſtly Challenges a right, both to our Bodies and our Souls : all that we can do or ſuffer for him is inconfiderable, in compariſon of the good we have received from him. And yet all theſe Mercies which I have already mentioned are nothing to that which is behind, his Redemption of us by the Death of his only begotten Son, whereas otherwiſe we had been loſt and undone for ever. This ſurely was the utmoſt Effort of infinite Love and Goodneſs ; a Mercy which the more it is conſidered, the more it will be admired, and will be the eternal Subject of our wonder, as well as of our Praise and Thankſgiving in Heaven. And now what doth God require of us, as an acknowledgment of this unconceivable Favour ? Not *thouſands of rams*, nor *tenthouſands of rivers of oyl* : 'tis only this, that we will glorifie him that hath redeemed us. *For ye are bought, &c.*

Which words contain theſe three things. 1. God's Mercy towards us ; *he hath bought us with a Price*, and ſo we are his by right of Purchase. 2. The Duty which thereupon he requires us to perform to him ; *we muſt therefore glorifie him*. 3. The manner how ; we muſt do it *in our Body and in our Spirit*, forasmuch as he hath redeemed and purchaſed both of them, and both are his. *For ye are bought with a price : therefore glorifie God in your body, and in your ſpirit, which are Gods.*

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Let us take a view of God's mercy towards us first; and when we have had a true Prospect of that we shall be, the better enabled to discern how great an Obligation lies upon us to perform that Duty, which thereupon the Apostle in the name of God requires of us. To take a view of God's mercy is an hard Task, though it is a very pleasant one; to take a full view of it is indeed impossible for either Men or Angels, since his mercy is, as himself is, infinite: and the greatest instance of his mercy, which the Scripture makes mention of is that which he hath shewed to Mankind. 'Tis true he created Creatures of an higher order and nobler nature than Man, even the glorious Angels of Light whom he ordained to be the immediate Attendants about his Throne, and advanced to the highest Honour and Felicity in his heavenly Kingdom. These, as they were the First-born of the Creation, so they received a double Portion from their Creator; and whereas he made Man only the Lord of his Footstool here below, he admitted them to be Inhabitants of his Palace above, and assigned to them everlasting Mansions of Light and Glory. Thus far God's Love and Goodness was greater towards the Angels than towards Man. But when some of these (once glorious) Creatures rebelled against their Creator, and fell from their happy Station, God was pleased to admit of no Mediator to intercede for their Pardon, but left them to reap the fruit of their Folly, and condemned them for ever to that remediless Misery into which their sin had most deservedly plunged them. But with Man he dealt otherwise: for when he also by transgressing that easie Command which was given him in Paradise, had

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incurred the same Condemnation with those apostate Spirits, God was pleased here to mingle Mercy with Justice, and to order the matter so, that tho' he did both pronounce and execute the Sentence of Death upon him, which he had threatned in case of his disobedience, yet he made even Death it self a Happiness to him, as well as a Punishment, a gate of Life and Immortality, and an inlet into a far more glorious Paradise than that which before he had forfeited. This was a Mercy beyond all Expectation, above the thoughts of Men or Angels to comprehend, that whereas he left no place of Repentance to the fallen Angels, but hath *reserved them in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day*, yet he had pity on Man though a Creature of an inferior Nature, so that even before he pronounced against him the Sentence of Death, he published a short Gospel of Peace and Reconciliation, and assured him, that *the seed of the woman should bruise the serpents head*. Thus did God utterly confound the Malice of Satan, and cause his mischief to return upon his own pate; his aim was to bring Man into the same Perdition with himself, without any hopes of recovery; that so he might insult over him as his Captive and Vassal for ever: but so far was God from suffering him to enjoy the Pleasure of such a Triumph, that he presently declares that that supposed Victory that he had gained over Man, should end in his own eternal overthrow; that though he had dispossessed the first *Adam* of his earthly Paradise, yet he would at his appointed time send another *Adam* that should conduct all the race of Mankind, that would believe in him and obey him, to take Possession of those glorious Mansions from whence



whence he and his rebellious Companions were fallen ; a Man whom all the Angels of God should worship ; a Man that should trample Satan under his feet ; a Man that should be one with God ; *at whose name every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth ;* a Man that should *have the keys of hell and of death*, who having *lead captivity captive*, and *spoiled principalities and powers* should ascend into the highest Heavens, and *sit on the right hand of God*, *Angels and Authorities, and Powers being made subject unto him.* But though God was resolved, that though Man was thus miserably lost, and sold into the hands of Satan, to the utter confusion and astonishment of him that had wrought his ruin, he should be redeemed and restored again ; yet this was no easie Task even to Omnipotence it self, but God was forced to be at the Expence, both of pains and charge to effect it. The Creation of Man, and of the whole World, cost him no trouble at all : *For he spake, and it was done ; he commanded and it stood fast :* but Man's Redemption cost the highest price that Heaven had to give ; *not corruptible things, as silver and gold, but the precious blood of the Son of God, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.* That Man might live, God himself was fain to become Man, and to die for the satisfaction of the Divine Justice. A Mystery so great, so incomprehensible, that though nothing be more plainly and fully revealed in the holy Scripture, yet many (who notwithstanding call themselves Christians) will not be perswaded to believe it, most impudently and ungratefully *denying the Lord that bought them, and bringing upon themselves swift destruction.* Thus you see the ransome that was paid for us ; we

*were bought with a price*, a Price ineffimable, a Price infinite, a Price greater than which the mercy of God could not give, and less than which his Justice would not accept. The greatness of this Price sufficiently intimates the great reason that there was, that such a Price as this should be paid. For certainly God [who doth nothing in vain] would never have been at such a vast Expence as this, had not there been great occasion for it : and so there was upon all accounts. The Wisdom, the Mercy, the Justice, all the Attributes of God at once required this Price, and all at once were glorified by the Payment of it far more than by the Creation of the World. The malice and cruelty of Satan required, that this Price should be paid for his Confusion ; and above all the Misery of Man required it for his Redemption. Though some of the Angels fell yet others (and doubtless the greatest part of them) kept their Station ; and so God was pleased to punish the one for their Rebellion, and to reward the other for their Fidelity. But with us the Case was otherwise : all the whole race of Man was lost in *Adam* ; insomuch that not one of his Posterity could plead Exemption, either from Death or Hell. And had God suffered them to have been all thus lost without any hopes of recovery ; Satan would have had too great cause to triumph, and blasphemously to boast that he had baffled the Wisdom and Goodness of God, having utterly ruined and destroyed Man the chief work of all the visible Creation, a Creature highly beloved of God and precious in his sight, whom he plainly declared that he designed for great and noble Ends, first by taking (as it were) special Counsel and Advice about his Creation, and then im-

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printing upon him his own glorious Image, and making him Lord of all the Creatures upon Earth. *Let us make man, saith he, in our own image, after our likeness : and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattel, and over all the earth; and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth;* Gen. 1. 26. It was therefore a Stratagem worthy of the wisdom and goodness of God; to rescue so considerable a part of the Creation out of the paw of that roaring Lyon who thought to have devoured it, and to make the wicked malice of Satan contrary to his Expectation, tend to the increasing not only of his own Misery, but of Man's Felicity. Lastly, the deplorable Condition of fallen Man required that this Price should be paid for his Redemption : and certainly it was none of the least Motives that induced God to lay it down. Our Saviour himself seems to intimate that it was the chief. *For, saith he, God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life,* Joh. 3, 16. In the prosecution of this Point I might be very large : for I should insist first upon that blessed Estate that Man enjoyed at his first Creation in innocence ; the Consideration of which would give us a truer prospect of that Misery, which he afterwards brought upon himself by his disobedience : for none can be so miserable as they that were once happy : and lastly, I should shew you how great Glory this price hath purchased for us, which would appear likewise the greater after the sight of that Misery from which it hath redeemed us : for rest is most welcome to the weary, ease and liberty is by none so highly valued

as by those persons that have been long detained in Bondage and Slavery, and Joy and Happiness doubles its sweetness to them that have drunk deepest of sorrow. But *who is sufficient for these things*. How can we that are all conceived and born in Sin apprehend the Happiness of the state of Innocence! Who is able to describe the horror of the infernal Pit, or to tell what it is to lie in Chains of darkness, *exiled for ever from the Divine Providence*! Who can ascend into the holy Hill of the Lord, that he may give us an account of those Pleasures which are at God's right hand for evermore! Even St. Paul himself, tho' he was bred up at the feet of Gamaliel and abounded with Learning and Eloquence, yet wanted words to tell us, what he heard and saw when he was caught up into the third Heaven, and could say no more of that wonderful Vision than that he heard *ἄρρητα ῥήματα*, words, or things unutterable. And in another place he tells us, that *eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him*. No, these Subjects are all of them too great either for our tongue to express, or for our thoughts to comprehend. Let it suffice us then to know in short, that whereas by Sin we had rendered our selves obnoxious to the greatest Misery that could possibly befall us, had sold our selves to be Slaves and Vassals of Satan, to be the most forlorn Objects of the eternal Scorn, and Insolence, and Cruelty of the Devil and his Angels; God in his infinite Mercy hath been pleased, by paying an inestimable price for our Ransome, even the precious Blood of his only begotten Son, to redeem us out of this *Bondage into the glorious liberty of the children*

*children of God.* He hath bought our Bodies from the everlasting torment of those Flames which never shall be quenched, and our Souls from the gnawing of that Worm which shall never die, to be the Temples of his holy Spirit here, and hereafter to be *fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God in the heavenly Jerusalem.* We are *bought with a price.*

And hath God thus bought us with so invaluable a Price, out of so dreadful Misery, unto so unspeakable Felicity? What returns then ought we to make unto him of praise and thanks for such infinite Mercy! How can we chuse but stand astonished and break out into the *Psalmists* Exclamation, *Lord, what is man, that thou art mindful of him, and the son of man that thou visitest him!* What was Man being in Honour, when he was but a degree lower than the Angels, that God should regard him above the rest of his Creatures; that he should *make him have dominion over the works of his hands, and put all things under his feet?* But when through his own fault he fell into Dishonour, and became like the Beasts that perish, what was he then, or what else could he expect, but that God should cast him for ever out of his Presence as the filth of the Creation? And when after all this he meets with Mercy instead of Vengeance, when God himself becomes his Advocate instead of his Enemy, and instead of condemning him to Hell, sends his only begotten Son to purchase for him the adoption of Sons, and to make him more than ever the Darling and Favourite of Heaven; what Testimony of gratitude ought we to shew for so incomprehensible Love? What can we say, what can we do, to this Preserver of men? The



Apostle tells us in the following words of my Text: we must glorifie him. *Ye are bought with a price: therefore glorifie God in your body, and in your spirit which are Gods.* And so I pass from God's mercy to our Duty. *He hath bought us with a price, we must therefore glorifie him.*

How easie an acknowledgment of how great a Mercy! What could God do more for us than he did? and what could we offer to him, even for the least of his Benefits, less than what he requires of us for the greatest? The slightest Favour that we receive from the bountiful hand of God, surely most justly Challenges from us the Sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving: and he requires no more of us when he hath given us the highest Demonstration of Love that ever he shewed to any of his Creatures: when he hath redeemed us from the lowest Abyss of misery, into which our Nature could sink, unto the most glorious and unspeakable Felicity, of which it could be capable; and hath done all this by paying for our Ransome, the richest and most precious Jewel that was to be found in all the Treasury of Heaven, still he asks but the same thing of us that he did before, *viz. that we will glorifie him.* And is it possible that there should be any man found that can refuse to perform so reasonable and pleasant a Service as this to so great a Benefactor? Is it possible that when the blessed Son of God, hath for our Salvation shed his most precious Blood, laid down his Life, and poured out his righteous soul unto death, and made it an offering for our sins, we should after all this think much to offer unto him *the calves of our lips*, and refuse to sing an Hymn of praise to our Redeemer, saying with the Saints in the Revelation, *Salvation, and glory,*

*glory, and honour, and power unto the Lord our God?* Yes it is so possible, that this black Ingratitude should be found amongst us, that the greatest part of Mankind are guilty of it. How many thousands are there amongst the Sons of men, that instead of *glorifying God in their body, and in their spirit*, even in the very face of the glorious light of the Gospel that shines about them, against all the strength of Reason, the universal Consent of Mankind in all Ages, and the secret Reluctancies, and dreadful Checks of their own Consciences impudently deny both the being of God, and the immortality of their own Souls? How many thousands are there more, who, though they own the name of Christians, and acknowledge one eternal and omnipotent God, yet instead of *glorifying God* because they *are bought with a price*, against the express words of the Apostle in my Text, and the concurrent Sense and Harmony of the whole Gospel, absolutely deny that there was ever any such purchase made, disowning both the Divinity of Christ, and the satisfaction of his Sufferings? As if the God of Truth had studied to impose upon the credulity of Mankind, and when he tells us most plainly in his word, that he hath *purchased his Church with his own blood*, that *we are bought with a price*, and that our blessed Saviour gave himself a *ransome for all*, and that not only *λύτρον* neither, but *ἀντίλυτρον*, a full, sufficient, and satisfactory Ransome; yet all this while he means quite otherwise than what the words seem to import, and none but these few sagacious Sophisters are ever able to discover the Divine Fallacy. How many thousands are there yet, even amongst us Christians, who, instead of *glorifying God in their*  
*body*

*body and in their spirit*, openly dishonour him in *both, glory in their shame*, and by their wicked and profligate Lives *crucify afresh the Son of God*, and *blaspheme that worthy Name by which they are called*? Lastly, how many Myriads, how many Millions are there besides all these, that yet sit in darkness and in the shadow of Death? Who never heard of the glad tidings of the Gospel, nor have had their understandings enlightened, and their hearts revived, and awakened out of the deadly Lethargy of Pagan Ignorance, and Superstition, and Idolatry, by the benign and salutiferous influence of the Son of righteousness? Who instead of glorifying God, give away his Glory to his greatest Enemy, and do Sacrifice unto the Devil? These are sad Considerations; that infinite Mercy and Love should be received with such prodigious Scorn and Ingratitude; that so invaluable a price as God hath given for us should be paid in vain for the greatest part of Mankind; that but a small and inconsiderable number in comparison of the whole Race of *Adam* should *wash their robes and make them white in the blood of that Lamb* that was slain for the sins of the whole World, and was a Sacrifice every way sufficient to make an atonement for them all. Who can reflect upon these things without sorrow?

Since then the Case is thus with us, that most of us are liable to lose the benefit of this Price, by neglecting to perform this Duty of glorifying God, to which it hath indispensably obliged us, let us briefly consider the reasonableness and necessity of this Duty (that we may be the more encouraged unto it) upon these following Accounts. First, this Duty of glorifying God is exceeding  
reasonable,

reasonable, forasmuch as God himself is the only Object in the world, that is in, and for himself glorious and adorable. It is a Maxim in Heraldry, that the King is the Fountain of Honour : how much more then is that Prerogative peculiar unto God, *By whom Kings reign, and Princes decree Justice* ? From whom all Honour, both in Heaven and Earth is derived, and unto whom it returns again, and centers it self as the Rivers in the Ocean. When we look upon the Moon shining in its full strength and beauty, we cannot but confess that its Light is very pleasant and comfortable to behold : but it diminishes much from its Excellency, when we consider that all its Lustre is borrowed, and that should the Sun withhold its influence, the other would be nothing else but a dark invisible Globe. So likewise when we consider the Angels and Archangels, and all the mighty Powers of Heaven that excel in Strength, and Goodness, and Holiness ; we must needs acknowledge that these are Creatures beyond all our thoughts happy and glorious : but when we consider further, that as great and good, and happy as they are, yet still they are but Creatures, and that all these rich Endowments that they have received they owe to *the father of spirits, from whom alone comes every good and perfect gift*, all the Praise and Glory redounds solely to the Almighty Creator, *Who makes his Angels spirits, and his Ministers a flaming fire*, and to whose Sovereign Will, and uncontrollable Power, the highest Archangel is as subject and subservient, as the most despicable Insect that we trample under our Feet. Since therefore it is most plain, and undeniable that God is the only Object in the world that is  
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in, and for himself glorious, and is the Spring and Fountain of Glory and Honour to all his Creatures that do in any measure partieipate of it, reason dictates to us (and we need enquire no further) that it is our Duty to glorifie him ; and that should we do otherwise even the very stones under our feet might justly rise up in Judgment against us and condemn us. Secondly, as God is the only Object that is in, and for himself glorious, and that in an infinite and incomprehensible manner ; so he created all things at the first for the manifestation of his own Glory, and requires this Homage to be paid him by every one of his Creatures in their respective Capacities. For any of the Creatures, even for the greatest of them, to love himself above all things, or to make his own Glory and Honour the end of his Actions is Folly, is Injustice, is Sin, is such foolish and unreasonable Pride, as cast the fallen Angels out of Heaven, and Man out of Paradise. But for God to do thus is both wise and just ; seeing that Wisdom and Equity requires, that nothing less than infinite Perfection should be the adequate Object of infinite Love and Glory, and therefore it would be a manifest piece of Injustice (of which God can never be capable) for him to give that Love or Glory to another, which is due to none else but himself alone. And accordingly he himself hath told us, that he never will do it ; *I am the Lord, saith he ; that is my name : and my glory will I not give to another, Isa. 42. 8.* No, he hath reserved it wholly to himself, and for the manifestation of it he hath created all things. So the four and twenty Elders confesse, *Rev. 4. 11. Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour, and power : for thou*



*thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are, and were created.* The ultimate end of the whole Creation, was the Glory of the Creator. *The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament sheweth his handy-work, saith the Psalmist, Ps. 19. 1.* whoth at considers the certain and regular Motions of the celestial Bodies, can chuse but extol and magnifie the Power and Wisdom of that God that made them, saying with the *Psalmist, Praise ye him, sun and moon; praise him all ye stars of light. Let them praise the name of the Lord: for he commanded, and they were created. He hath also established them for ever and ever: he hath made a decree which shall not pass?* Neither were the Heavens only created for the Glory of God, but the Earth also declares the same, and his wonders are seen in the Deep. Even the mercilefs and unruly Sea obeys the Decree of him who hath *shut it up with doors,* and suffers its proud Waves to be bounded and checkt by the Sand. *There go the ships, and there is that Leviathan whom he hath made to play therein.* The Earth faithfully performs the Task that was imposed upon it at its first Creation, and ceases not to bring forth its fruit in its Season; and the most inconsiderable Creature that it nourishes, even the smallest Fly, publishes the wisdom, and power of its Creator, as much as the greatest Elephant. And who again that considers these things can chuse but proceed with the *Psalmist,* and say, *Praise the Lord 148 Ps. from the earth ye dragons, and all deeps: fire and hail, snow and vapour; stormy wind fulfilling his word. Mountains and all hills; fruitful trees and all cedars; beasts and all cattel; creeping things and all fowl.* And shall all these inferiour Creatures daily

daily laud and magnifie their Maker (as most plainly they do, while in their several Stations they perform his Commands) shall the little Birds warble out Hymns of Praise, and every Hedge produce a Quire to sing an Hallelujah; and shall Man alone be silent? Man whom God himself *hath crowned with glory and honour*; whom he *hath made to have dominion over the works of his hands, and hath put all things under his feet: all sheep and oxen, yea, and the beasts of the field; the fowl of the air, and the fish of the sea, and whatsoever passeth through the paths of the seas*? Man whom when he had lost all this Honour; when Sin had laid both it, and himself together in the dust, out of which they were both raised at the first, God was pleased by a Miracle of mercy to restore to Honour once more, nay to greater Honour than he had before, even to the Honour (if he forfeits it not again by his own monstrous Ingratitude) of being made like unto the Angels in Heaven, of being *numbered among the children of God, and having his lot among the saints*? I say shall Man whom of all the rest of his Creatures, God hath delighted most to Honour, be of all the rest of the Creatures, the most ungrateful and most backward to give Praise and Glory to God? Oh, wheresoever this Ingratitude be to be found, let it not be found amongst us; but let us still joyn with the *Psalmist*, and say, *Kings of the earth, and all people; princes and all judges of the earth: both young men, and maidens; old men, and children: Let them praise the name of the Lord: for his name only is excellent; his glory is above the earth and heaven.* Thirdly, that this Duty of glorifying God, is both reasonable and necessary is evident, in as much as all Mankind,  
both

both good and bad, shall most certainly, one way or other, give glory to God. For the *Lord* will be *King for ever*, *be the people never so tumultuous and unquiet*: and though he be offended, and provoked, and blasphemed every day, yet he is strong as well as patient, and will one day vindicate his abused patience and long suffering, and will exalt himself above the heavens, and his glory above all the earth. Then shall all those foolish Wretches that refused to give unto the *Lord* the glory due unto his name, and to celebrate the Praise of his mercy that endureth for ever, be forced by their everlasting Punishment to glorifie his Justice. For the glory of the *Lord* shall endure for ever: the *Lord* shall rejoyce in his works. For he hath made all things for himself, saith Solomon; Yea, even the wicked for the day of evil, Prov. 16. 4. Thus did God get himself Honour, as well by punishing the stubbornness of *Pharaoh*, whom he overthrew in the Sea, as by rewarding the obedience of *Moses*, to whom he gave Power to command it. And thus at the end of all things, will he cause his Justice eternally to shine as bright and glorious below, even in the midst of the infernal darkness, as his mercy shall above in the Regions of light and happiness. And Oh how sad, how dreadful will our Condemnation be, if we neglect this great Salvation that is offered us; if notwithstanding this wonderful Redemption that God hath wrought for us, we will again sell our selves Slaves to Sin and Satan? And if but the tasting of a forbidden fruit brought Death into the world, and made all Mankind obnoxious to the eternal wrath of God, what Vengeance is reserved for them that tread under foot the Blood of his only begotten Son; that despise  
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the very height of his Love, and the utmost riches of his Mercy. Since then we must unavoidably glorify either the Mercy of God, or his Justice, let us chuse rather to adore the former, than to be broken in pieces by the latter : for they that will not submit to his gentle Government while he holds forth his golden Sceptre, shall be sure to feel the Severity of his rod of Iron. Lastly, (for I must not be tedious, though the Subject be so copious that I might heap up Arguments without number : Since there is not the least part of the Creation, excepting wicked Men and wicked Angels, but what sets us an Example, and invites us to glorify our Creator) this Duty of glorifying God is most highly reasonable for us to perform while we are upon Earth, because it will be our eternal Task if ever we come to Heaven. Those glorious Mansions above resound incessantly with Hymns of Praise unto the King of Saints, *To whom all Angels cry aloud continually, the Heavens and all the powers therein, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of Sabaoth. Heaven and earth are full of the Majesty of thy glory.* If therefore we desire to perform this Duty in the next Life, it is not only reasonable, but necessary that we begin it in this. For certainly if we do not now tune our Voice to an Hallelujah, and practise the Musick of Heaven while we are upon Earth, Candidates for a Place in the celestial Chaire, we shall never be qualified to bear a part in that *new Song*, which is to be sung before the throne of God, and *none* shall be able to *learn it but the Saints, that are redeemed from the Earth.* Let us therefore now, and evermore joyn with those blessed Spirits, in glorifying our Almighty Creator, saying as our Church teaches

ches us, (and with which words we will at present break off our Discourse) *Therefore with Angels and Archangels, and with all the Company of Heaven, we laud and magnifie thy glorious Name, evermore praising thee, and saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of Hosts, Heaven and Earth are full of thy Glory; Glory be to thee, O Lord most high.*

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# S E R M O N V.

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1 COR. VI. 20.

*For ye are bought with a price, &c.*

**T**HE reasonableness of this Duty of glorifying God, to which in these words the Apostle exhorts us, we have already seen; and indeed he must be blind that sees it not, when the whole Creation joins unanimously in the constant performance of it, and every Corner of it declares the Power, and Wisdom, and Goodness of the Almighty Creatour. But though the reasonableness of this Duty must needs be apparent to all Men that believe that there is a God (and they that believe not that, though they may seem to be Rational Creatures, are certainly most notorious Fools) yet all Men are not so clearly agreed how to perform this Duty: and that is the next thing that falls under our Consideration, and the last Particular to be handled in my Text, the manner how we must glorify God; we must do it in our Body and in our Spirit, forasmuch as he hath redeemed and purchased both of them, and both are his. *For ye are bought with a price, &c.*

*First,* We must glorify God in our Spirit; that is, in our Soul: and in this all Parties are agreed; even the very Quakers themselves, the most stupid

stupid and senseless Fanaticks, that have surseited upon Religion, and overwhelmed and oppressed their Reason by that very thing which was designed to refine and perfect it, will all of them acknowledge, that God is to be *worshipped in Spirit and in Truth*; and that their Soul ought to bow to him, though their Body be as inflexible as a Pillar of Marble. And indeed this is the chief and main thing that we are to take care of in the worship of God, that our Soul be zealously and earnestly intent upon what we are about: for God sees not as Man sees; he regards not so much the outward Gestures of our Body, though (as I shall shew hereafter) he expects these from us too; but he looks especially upon the inward Thoughts and Intentions of our Heart; and if these be not right all our bodily worship is nothing worth. If we draw near to God with our Lips, and our Heart be far from him; if we lift up our Eyes and our Hands to Heaven, and our Mind be wedded to the World; if we prostrate our Bodies upon the Earth and lay our Mouths in the Dust, yet if our Spirit be not proportionably humbled, all this is no better than gross Hypocrisie, a downright mocking of God who cannot be deceived with counterfeit shews and shadows of Religion. If therefore we desire to glorifie God aright, we must be sure chiefly and principally to glorifie him in our Spirit, and as Solomon advises us, we must keep *our Heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life*, Prov. 4. 23. Now this glorifying God in our Spirit implies briefly thus much; That we make a free-will-offering of our Soul unto God, *committing the keeping of it unto him as unto a faithful Creator*, permitting him to guide and govern it

according to his own good will and pleasure throughout the whole course of our life, in whatsoever circumstances, both in Prosperity and Adversity; so that every thought and motion of it may evermore tend to his Glory. He that hath made such an Offering as this unto God will always remember that he is not his own, but that his Body and Soul are bought with a price, and that both of them are God's; and consequently will be careful to direct all his Thoughts, Words and Actions to this one end, that the Glory of God may be advanced by whatsoever he undertakes. He will have God always in his thoughts, as the only Object of his highest Love and Adoration: and this will make him watch continually over his Soul, and keep it pure and undefiled, that no unclean thing may enter into that Spirit which is wholly devoted to the God of Parity. For certainly nothing can be a more powerful motive to induce us to keep our Heart with all diligence than the consideration of God's Omnipresence and Omniscience, that he sees us perpetually in our most private Retirements and searches and knows our most secret and hidden thoughts. Hence it was that God himself gave that command to the Father of the Faithful, *Gen. 17. 1. Walk before me, and be thou perfect.* He that walks before God, that is, he that orders his whole Life and Conversation as knowing and considering that God's Eye is always upon him, cannot chuse but endeavour to keep both his Soul and his Body blameless and undefiled, and strive to be *perfect as his Father which is in Heaven is perfect.* Again, he that hath made such an Offering as this of his Soul unto God will be careful that in all things his Soul be obedient and conformable to the Will of God.

God. In his Health and Prosperity, if Riches increase he will not set his Heart upon them ; but with Humility and Thankfulness will receive them as knowing himself not to be a Proprietor, but a Steward only of the manifold Blessings of God, and will accordingly dispose of them so that God may have the Glory, and his distressed Brethren the benefit of his Wealth. On the other hand, if God sends Trouble and Affliction unto him, if he deprives him of his Estate, or his Health, or both together, whatsoever Calamity befalls him, he will still bless and praise his Name as well when he takes away as when he gives, when he smites as well as when he heals; knowing and considering that whatsoever he either enjoys or suffers in this World comes to him from the Hand of an infinitely wise, and good, and gracious Father that will be sure first or last to make all things work together for good to them that love him: Thus will the blessed Will and Pleasure of God be unto him as it were the Load-star to guide and direct his Soul how to steer its course towards the Haven of everlasting Happiness streight and steady through all the Changes and Chancess of this mortal life, teaching him that hard Lesson, which so few can learn, how to separate Riches from Pride, and Poverty from Impatience; that neither the one may prevail with him to forget God and worship Mammon, nor the other to repine at the Divine Providence, and to fret and vex himself at the Prosperity of his Brethren. If God blesses him he will acknowledge himself to be less than the least of all his Mercies; and if he afflicts him, he will receive it as the Correction of a tender Father that pities and loves his Children, even when he chastizes them.

Lastly, He that hath made this Offering of his Soul unto God whensoever he is in God's House in order to the celebration of his Publick Worship, or whensoever he is in his Closet performing his Private Devotions, will be exceeding careful to set his Heart and Affections then especially upon those things which are above; he will be sure to banish all worldly thoughts out of his Mind, and study to behave himself so as becomes one that is admitted to appear in the Presence-Chamber of the King of Kings, either to put up his Petitions to him, or to receive his Commands; following that excellent Counsel of *Solomon*, Eccl. 5. 1. *Keep thy Foot when thou goest to the House of God, and be more ready to hear than to give the Sacrifice of Fools: for they consider not that they do evil.* And how few there are that do follow this Counsell is but too evident from that vain and loose Deportment of many persons which we daily see in the Church, to the great scandal and grief of all pious and devout Christians, who cannot chuse but be exceedingly troubled and offended to see God publickly dishonoured and affronted in his own House, by persons that pretend to come thither on purpose to joyn in the Celebration of his Publick Worship and Praise. But of this I shall have occasion to speak more anon, when I come to shew you how we are to glorifie God in our Body, which I proceed now to do.

And *First*, as before I observed, That we are to glorifie God in our Spirit, by keeping it pure and undefiled by sin; so must we do in our Body too. For it is impossible that a clean Soul should dwell in an unclean Body: but if the one be foul the other will certainly partake of its Pollutions. Indeed it



is impossible that the Body should sin without the Soul, since it cannot act but by the Command and Concurrent Assistance of the Soul, whereas the Soul may sin without the help of the Body, and we may commit Adultery, or Murder, or Theft in our Heart though our Body never be concerned in the perpetration of any such Crimes. And therefore whosoever truly and sincerely glorifies God in his Spirit will by a most inevitable consequence glorifie him in his Body also. He that hath banished all unchast thoughts out of his Mind will make a Covenant with his Eyes too, that they shall not cast a wanton glance upon Beauty. He whose Heart is free from all covetous Desires after his Neighbour's Goods will keep his Hands also from picking and stealing. He that is perfectly in Charity with all Men, and is not only ready to forgive, but heartily loves, his Enemies will not only fetter his Feet that they shall not be swift to shed Blood, but he will also bridle his Tongue, and keep it from evil-speaking, lying and slandering, and will be so far from hurting any Man by word or deed, that he will most gladly embrace every opportunity that is offered him of doing good to any that stand in need of help. He therefore that hath devoted his Soul wholly to the Glory of God, will devote his Body likewise to the same end; he will be careful to cleanse his Hands as well as his Heart, to purifie his whole Man; and since God hath bought his Body as well as his Soul with a price, since one as well as the other is a Temple of the Holy Ghost, and a Member of Christ, he will endeavour to the best of his power that both of them may be preserved blameless, and undefiled, and unspotted of the World, knowing

that God will in no wise accept of a polluted Offering. And this is the direct sense and meaning of the Apostle's Argument from the fifteenth Verse to the end of this Chapter, whereby he labours to dissuade the *Corinthians* from Fornication, and all manner of Uncleanneſs. *Flee Fornication*, ſaith he, *every ſin that a Man doth is without the Body; but he that committeth Fornication ſinneth againſt his own Body.* What, know ye not that your Body is the Temple of the Holy Ghoſt which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorifie God in your Body and in your Spirit, which are God's. But further, if we will glorifie God in our Body as we ought, we muſt not only be careful to keep it chaſt and undefiled by Luſt and Wantonneſs, but we muſt ſtudy to adorn and beautify it, ſo that it may be acceptable in the ſight of God, by Temperance, and Sobriety, and Moderation in all things, endeavouring to preſerve it free from all manner of Luxury and Exceſs whether in Meat, or Drink, or Apparel, or Recreation, or whatſoever elſe with which it is concerned. Meat and Drink in this mortal life are ſo neceſſary to us that we cannot live without them; but if we indulge our ſelves in the immoderate uſe of either of them, inſtead of preſerving our Health it will moſt certainly deſtroy it. So likewiſe modeſt and decent Raiment is in a manner as neceſſary, for the covering our Nakedneſs, and defending us from the Injuries of the Weather; but ſtill at the beſt it is but the Devil's Livery, which we had never worn had it not been for the Diſobedience of our firſt Parents, and which it much better becomes us to be aſhamed of than to glory in. If therefore we affect vain and pompous

pompous Attire, if we long for every fantaslick Dress as fast as the apish Fashion-mongers can invent them, till we have array'd our selves so that we think we may vie both for Smell and Beauty with the Lilies of the Field; by so doing, though we may hide the Nakedness of our Body, we shall most certainly discover that of our Soul; and we shall appear loathsome and deformed, not only in the Eyes of God, from whom nothing can be hid, but in the Eyes also of all godly and sober Christians, and shall stink in their Nostrils amidst all our precious Odours and Perfumes. And therefore our Blessed Saviour hath commanded us not to take any care for the Provision either of Meat, or Drink, or Raiment, any further than what Necessity and Decency requires, *Matth. 6. 31. Take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, what shall we drink? or, wherewithall shall we be cloathed? (for after all these things do the Gentiles seek) for your Heavenly Father knows that ye have need of all these things. But seek ye first the Kingdom of God, and his Righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you.* Such care as this much better becomes an Epicure that expects his Portion in this life, than a Christian that owns himself to be but a Stranger and a Sojourner here upon Earth, and whose Treasure, and Heart, and Conversation is in Heaven. Therefore, as our Apostle exhorts us, *1 Cor. 10. 31. Whether we eat, or drink, or whatsoever we do, let us do all to the Glory of God.*

Again, we are to glorifie God in our Body, by labouring daily in some honest Calling; that so we may provide for our selves and our Families, and be useful and serviceable to our Country. It was a Command as well as a Curse that God laid upon

on all Mankind in the person of *Adam* immediately after his Transgression; *In the sweat of thy Face shalt thou eat Bread.* And if we yield a conscientious Obedience to this Command, labouring as God hath ordained in a lawful Employment, we may turn this Curse into a Blessing, and provide for our selves not only *that Meat which perishes* in this World, but that *which endures unto everlasting life* in the next. And on the other hand, whosoever thinks to exempt himself from the force of this Command, until some natural, or accidental Infirmary hath dispensed with him, shall not escape the Sentence of the Curse; but if he will not sweat here, he shall be sure to burn hereafter: he shall have no Bread in this World (or at least, none that he can justly call his own) and he shall want Water in the other wherewithal to cool his Tongue. Not that all Men are obliged by this Command to the same measure and Degree of bodily Labour (this were to degrade the States-man from the Council-table to the Threshing-floor, and the King himself from sitting upon his Throne to grind at the Mill) but that all Men are obliged in their several Stations and Capacities to employ their Body as well as their Soul to the Glory of God, and to the Service of the Country wherein they live. And this may be done by him that manages but a Pen as well as by him that holds a Plough; and, if he orders his business well, of the two the former undoubtedly doth not only do the greatest service both to God and Man, but takes the greatest pains also, and doth most hurt and prejudice to his Health: for the wise Man hath told us, *That of making many Books there is no end, and much study is a weariness of the Flesh,* Eccl. 12. 12. Therefore

fore as our Apostle exhorts us again, *1 Cor. 7. 24. Let every Man wherein he is called therein abide with God.* But further,

We must glorifie God in our Body not only by our Sweat, but, if we be called to it, by our Blood too, which we must be always ready patiently and chearfully to shed for his sake, whensoever he is pleased to require it of us. The Cross of Christ is a Burden that every Christian is obliged to bear, and none ought to think it grievous, though many now-a-days are ashamed of the very sign of it. And Persecution, tho' it be a thing at which Flesh and Blood is apt to startle, yet it is no more than what every Disciple of Christ must expect to have his share of. Our Saviour himself hath told us as much, *Luke 14. 26. If any Man come to me, and hate not his Father, and Mother, and Wife, and Children, and Brethren, and Sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my Disciple. And whosoever doth not bear his Cross, and come after me, cannot be my Disciple.* And St. Paul tells us, *That all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer Persecution, 2 Tim. 3. 12.* This indeed is the hardest Task that God requires us to perform: but as it is the hardest so it is the noblest, that which of all things tends most to the Glory of God, and to our own Happiness; and therefore we should be so far from fearing it, that above all things we should most earnestly desire it, and as our Saviour commands us, and as we read, that the Apostles, and Primitive Christians did, we should *rejoyce and be exceeding glad* whensoever God calls us to suffer Persecution, knowing that *great is our reward in Heaven*, and that *our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of Glory.*

Lastly,



Lastly, (for I do but name these Particulars, designing to insist something more largely upon that which I am now propounding) We must glorifie God in our Body by an humble, reverent and decent behaviour of our Body in the House of God, especially in the time of the Celebration of his Publick Worship. This is a thing so undeniable, that one would think it should be very needless to produce any Arguments to enforce the practice of it: and surely that Man must either have lost the use of his Reason, or at least must have extreamly impaired it by Prejudice and a bad Education that will not readily acknowledge, that God is to be glorified and worshipped by us as well with our Body as with our Soul. But yet if we consider the prophane and graceless deportment of many (especially of the vulgar sort of People) in our Country Churches now-a-days, that are so far from worshipping God with a bended Knee, that they will not vouchsafe so much as to uncover their Heads before him; but most irreverently and impudently sit themselves down upon their Seats and put on their Hats even in the very Face of the Lord of Hosts; as if they came into his House rather to defie him than to adore him, and to publish to the World, that Dust and Ashes dares presume to sit unconcerned in the presence of that infinite Majesty before whose Throne Angels and Archangels and all the glorious Inhabitants of Heaven cast their Crowns and fall down and worship, it cannot but be granted, that it is both reasonable and needful to prove the necessity of Bodily Worship in the House of God, and to exhort all Men to the practice of it; which I shall do (as briefly as I can) from these following Considerations.

And

And first, that we must worship God with our Body as well as with our Soul is evident from this one Consideration, because God hath redeemed our Body as well as our Soul from Hell, and designs to glorifie the one as well as the other in Heaven, which is the Apostle's Argument in my Text, and is abundantly sufficient of it self, though there were no more to back it. *For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorifie God in your Body and in your Spirit, which are God's.* What hath God redeemed our Bodies as well as our Souls from everlasting Misery? and hath he promised to raise our vile Body out of the Dust, and to change it into a Glorious, Immortal and Incorruptible Body, and to admit it together with our Soul into the Regions of Eternal Joy and Happiness, and shall this Body, as if it were utterly insensible of this inestimable Favour, shew no demonstrations of Gratitude to so great a Benefactor? What can be more ungrateful? What can be more unreasonable?

Secondly, That God requires that we should worship him with our Body as well as with our Soul is plain from the Second Commandment, wherein he hath forbidden us to bow down our Body before an Image for this very reason, because he is a Jealous God (*i. e.*) jealous of his Honour, which he declares that we rob him of whensoever we bow our Body (thereby intending Religious Worship) to any other but himself alone. And therefore we find in the *Revelation*, that when St. John offers to fall down and worship before the Feet of the Angel, the Angel forbids him; *See thou do it not, for I am thy fellow Servant, and of thy Brethren the Prophets, and of them which keep the Sayings of this Book, worship God, Rev. 22. 9.* Whosoever therefore

fore neglects to pay Religious Worship unto God with his Body transgresses the Second Commandment, as well as he that pays that worship to any other thing, or person, but God only. Hence is that pathetical Exhortation of the *Psalmist*; *O come let us worship, and fall down, and kneel before the Lord our Maker*; which our Church hath appointed daily to be repeated by us in her Morning Service, that so we might be continually put in mind of this duty; and be careful always to behave our selves Humbly, Reverently, and Devoutly in the House of God.

Thirdly, It is necessary that we worship God with our Body for the satisfaction both of Men and Angels. It is the peculiar Prerogative of God that he only can discern the secret Thoughts and Intentions of our Hearts; and therefore though a private Ejaculation of our Soul, wherein our Body is not at all concerned, may be very acceptable and well-pleasing in his sight at other times; yet in the time of our Publick Devotions in the Church the case is otherwise. For there both Men and Angels are Spectators of our Piety, neither of which can judge of the Sincerity of it any otherwise than by our outward Behaviour; which if it be devout and reverent they will conclude, that our Soul is so too, and will gladly joyn with us in our publick Worship of that God who is the common Lord and Master of us all. But if otherwise, not only all good Men will take offence at our Prophaneness, but we shall much more offend those blessed Spirits, and provoke them to loath and abhorr our Religious Assemblies, which delight to frequent them so long as they observe that we behave our selves so that they may plainly discern our inward  
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Piety by our outward Deportment. And for this reason St. Paul forbids Men to be covered in the Church, and Women to be uncovered *because of the Angels*, 1 Cor. 11. The Angels cannot endure to behold any such indecency and disorder in the Church; but are highly displeased at it as a thing that tends much to the dishonour of God, and most evidently discovers, that such persons as are guilty of it are destitute of true Religion; for it cannot be imagined, that when every little Passion of our Mind causes (more or less) some visible alteration in our Body, that Religion, which is the noblest Passion with which our Soul can be affected (and that too at that very time when we come with a pretence to profess it openly before Men and Angels in God's own House) should cause no alteration at all, but that our Body all this while should sit as unconcerned as one of the Pillars of the Church. No certainly, if our Soul were truly humbled, as it ought to be before the Throne of Grace, it would command the Body to humble it self likewise, to uncover the Head, and bend the Knee, to lift up the Eyes and the Hands, and to bear it company, with a devout and reverent behaviour of all its Members, in its Suit and Supplication to the Divine Majesty. Therefore as St. James exhorts us, to *shew our Faith by our Works*, so likewise let us shew the Devotion of our Soul by that of our Body. For as *Faith without Works is dead*, so is inward Piety (especially in the time of God's Publick Service in the Church) dead also, except it be accompanied by bodily Worship.

Lastly, That God is to be worshipped with our Body as well as with our Soul is evident from the universal

universal consent and practice of Mankind in all Ages, all Nations, and Countries of the World whatsoever. Not only Christians, but Jews, Mahometans, Heathens and Pagans, all agree in this point, that Divine Worship is to be performed by our Body as well as by our Soul. And therefore those Men that imagin Bodily Worship to be needless in the Service of God and behave themselves accordingly, do in effect render themselves no better than Monsters, not only to be wondered at, but even to be abhorred in that particular by all the rest of Mankind; and certainly an honest Pagan (being before acquainted with the Custom of our Country, which obliges us to uncover our Heads, and to stand bare in the presence of our betters, though but mortal Men like our selves) should he come into some of our Churches, and observe Men sitting irreverently with their Hats on in the House of God, even at the very time when they are receiving a Message concerning their everlasting Salvation from the Mouth of his Ambassadour, would stand astonished, and exclaim against Christianity, as the most impious and profane Religion in the World, that allowed men to be hail fellow well met with that God whom they pretend to worship, shewing him less respect and reverence even in his own House than they ordinarily pay to a Man that is but a little their Superiour either in Estate or Quality. And I would fain have those persons that dare be thus impudent in the presence of the Almighty, answer me this one Question, Whether they would do the same thing in case they should see God visibly sitting upon his Throne of Glory, or in case they should see the Lord Jesus coming in the Clouds of Heaven attended with all  
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his Angels. If in this case they would fall down and worship (as I question not but that they would) I know no reason why they should not likewise behave themselves with a profound Reverence and Devotion both of Body and Soul in the Church, which is the place of God's special and extraordinary presence, and is (when we behave our selves in it as we ought) a lively emblem and representation of Heaven it self: and then surely it is but reasonable that we that sit at God's Foot-stool here on Earth should uncover our Heads and bend our Knees in his presence when we read that the Holy Angels do no less above, casting their Crowns and falling down and worshipping before his Throne in Heaven: and if we will not follow their Example now, it is greatly to be feared that we shall never be admitted to bear them company hereafter.

But after all this, granting (which I hope I have sufficiently proved) that bodily Worship of God is necessary, it may reasonably be demanded wherein this bodily worship chiefly consists, and what Gestures and Ceremonies are to be used by us in our performance of it. To which I answer, that herein we are to be determined by the Custom of the Countrey wherein we live, and the appointment of the Church whereof we are Members. In general therefore those Gestures and Ceremonies which by the Custom of our Countrey we are obliged to use in token of civil Honour and Respect in our Addresses to men that are much our Superiours; as for Example, to the King himself; we are to use likewise by way of religious Worship to Almighty God. If therefore it be an affront to the King for a Subject

to be covered in his presence, or to offer a petition to him in any other posture but upon his Knees; reason will tell us that it must needs be a much greater affront to God for any man to put his Hat on in his house, or to sit irreverently upon his Seat when the Minister is upon his Knees offering up Prayers and Supplications unto the Throne of Grace in the Name of the whole Congregation. Persons that thus mis-behave themselves in the Worship of God may justly expect such an answer from him as he gives to the Priests that offered polluted bread upon his Altar, *Mal. 1. 8.* *Offer it now unto thy Governour, will he be pleased with thee or accept thy Person, saith the Lord of Hosts.* In the Oriental Countries therefore where men never use this Ceremony of uncovering their Heads to their Superiours, but stand covered even in the Presence of their Emperour; neither is it practicable in their Temples; since amongst them the uncovering of the Head is so far from being acknowledged to be a Demonstration of Honour and Respect, that it is indeed lookt upon to be an absurd and ridiculous thing, and therefore instead thereof they use to put their Shooes off their feet whensoever they enter'd into their Churches; which is a Custom in those parts of greater Antiquity perhaps than *Moses* himself; it being not at all improbable that that command which God gave to him in the Bush (*Exod. 3. 5.*) was no institution of a new Ceremony, but only an information that that place was hallowed by the extraordinary Presence of God; and therefore he ought to behave himself with the same fear and reverence, and to use the same manner of Worship and Adoration which in those Countries was usual and custo-

customary in the Temples and holy Places dedicated to the Service of God. *Put off thy shooes, saith he, from off thy feet ; for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground.* And had the Ceremony of uncovering the Head been in use in those Countries as it is here, we may rationally conjecture that God would have altered his Command accordingly. But to leave these remote Countries, with which we are not much concerned, and to return to our own : from what hath been said it is plain that the outward Gestures and Ceremonies which we are obliged to use in the publick Worship of God are chiefly these three ; kneeling at Prayers, Standing up at other times when it is appointed by the Church, and having our Heads uncovered at all times. As for sitting, though the general practice of all men hath made it to be connived at in the time of the Sermon (or the like) yet it is a posture that is never very commendable in the Church : it is certainly in the time of Prayer most intolerable : and he that uses it least at other times deserves most commendation, and comes nearest to the practice of the first and purest Ages of Christianity. It was therefore a pious resolution of Bishop Hall to this purpose in one of his Meditations. *God, saith he, is the Lord of my Body also : and therefore challenges as well reverent Gesture as inward Devotion. I will ever in my Prayers either stand, as a servant before my Master ; or kneel, as a Subject to my Prince.* I might instance in more particulars, but, that I may hasten to a conclusion I shall name only this one, which will comprehend all the rest ; and that is, That our Bodily Worship may be compleat, we must take care that our Tongue be duly employed in bearing,

its part in the publick Service of God as the Church hath appointed : which if we would do, we should avoid that scandalous Behaviour which is too commonly seen in our Churches, of whispering, and laughing, and playing idle Tricks ; which is a thing to be abominated by all pious and devout Christians. Thus I have shewed you according to my ability the Summ and Substance of this duty of glorifying God in our Body, and in our Spirit; which that we may evermore perform effectually : *God of his infinite mercy vouchsafe to direct, sanctifie, and govern both our hearts and Bodies in the ways of his Laws, and in the Works of his Commandments that through his most mighty protection, both here and ever, we may be preserved in Body and Soul, through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.*

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# S E R M O N VI.

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HEB. IV. 14.

*Seeing then that we have a great High-priest, that is passed into the Heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our Profession.*

**T**HERE are four several Steps or Degrees of our Saviour's Exaltation: Three of which are already past, and the other is yet to come. The first is his Resurrection from the Dead: The second is his Ascension into Heaven: The third is his Session at the Right Hand of God: The fourth is his coming again with Glory to judge both the Quick and the Dead. The first of these, his Resurrection from the Dead we Commemorated at *Easter*, and the present time invites us now to Exercise our Meditations upon the second, his Ascension into Heaven, and my Text furnishes us with a very excellent Method for the doing of it to the Glory of God, and the Good and Comfort of our own Souls. For first, the Apostle lays down the Truth of this Doctrine, that our Saviour is ascended into Heaven,

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ven, and secondly, he shews us what influence the consideration of his Ascension should have upon us. So that the Text it self is an Epitome of a Sermon containing both Doctrine and Application. The Doctrine that our Saviour is ascended into Heaven, the Apostle takes for granted in the former part of the Verse, *Seeing then that we have a great High-priest, that is passed into the Heavens, Jesus the Son of God.* And this Doctrine he confirms, *chap. 9: ver. 24. For Christ is not entred into the Holy Places made with Hands, which are the Figures of the true, but into Heaven it self, now to appear in the presence of God for us, and chap. 7. ver. 26. Such an High-priest became us, who is Holy, Harmless, Undeiled, separate from Sinners, and made higher than the Heavens.* The Application which the Apostle makes of this Doctrine is in the latter part of my Text, and it is this, that since Christ is ascended into Heaven, we ought stoutly and resolutely to maintain the Profession of our Christian Religion, and to contend earnestly for the Faith which was once delivered to the Saints. *Seeing then, &c.*

In speaking to which Text, I shall do these three Things; First, I shall shew that Jesus Christ our Redeemer, the Eternal Son of God, is truly ascended into Heaven. Secondly, That he ascended thither as our High-priest. And Thirdly, I shall conclude with the Apostles Application, and shew you how strongly this should oblige us to hold fast our Profession. First, I shall shew you, That Jesus Christ our Redeemer, the Eternal Son of God, he who we own and believe to be the true Messias, whom all the Prophets pointed at, is truly ascended into Heaven. And here it will be necessary

cessary to clear two Things by the way. First, What is meant by that Heaven into which Christ is ascended; And secondly, how, and in what manner he is said to have ascended thither. For the first of these, not to trouble you with an account of all the several Significations of the word Heaven in Scripture, we are to understand by that Heaven into which our Saviour is ascended, the Heaven of Heavens, the highest and most glorious Heaven, which is the Imperial Throne of the Majesty of God, far above all those Celestial Orbs which are visible to our Sight, wherein the Sun, and Moon, and Stars perform their constant and regular Motions, according to those Laws which God gave them at their first Creation. Through all these Heavens our Saviour passed in his Ascension, as is plain from my Text, if we consult the Original (for what our Translation Renders *is passed into the Heavens*, is in the Greek, διελθὺς τοὺς οὐρανοὺς, which is passed through the Heavens, (i. e.) through all these visible Heavens, into that invisible one, wherein he dwelt with his Father in inaccessible Light and Glory, and Majesty from all Eternity. And that this is the meaning of that Heaven into which our Saviour is ascended, is plain from that Expression of our Apostle, which I cited before, *Hebr. 7. 26.* where he tells us, That such an High-priest became us, as was *made higher than the Heavens*: And likewise from that, *Eph. 4. 10.* *He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all Heavens.* Thus ye see what is meant by that Heaven, into which our Saviour is ascended. For the second Thing, how, and in what manner he is said to have ascended thither: I answer, he ascended not by any local

Motion or Translation of his Divine Nature from Earth to Heaven, (for that being Infinite and Omnipresent, filling all places at once, cannot be supposed to be capable of being removed any whither, where before it was not) but he ascended by translating his humane Nature, his whole Man, both Body and Soul, from Earth, where he had assumed that Nature, and hypostatically united it to his Divinity, unto the Right Hand of God in the highest Heavens. And that Christ is thus ascended into Heaven, the Scripture most amply and plainly assures us. First, this Ascension of his was typified and prefigured under the Mosaical Law, by the High-priests entering once a Year into the Holy of Holies, to make an Atonement for himself, and the People, as our Apostle shews us, *chap. 9. of this Epistle. The Holy Ghost, this signifying, saith he, That the way into the holiest of all was not made manifest, while as the first Tabernacle was yet standing, which was a Figure for the time then present. But Christ being come an High-priest of good Things to come by a greater and more perfect Tabernacle not made with Hands, that is to say, not of this Building, neither by the Blood of Goats and Calves, but by his own Blood, entered in once into the Holy Place, having obtained Eternal Redemption for us. Again, this Ascension of our Saviour into Heaven, was Typified by those extraordinary Translations of Enoch and Elias. Secondly, it was foretold by the Prophets, as appears by that of Ps. 68. 18. *Thou hast ascended on high, thou hast led Captivity Captive: Thou hast received Gifts for Men*; which place St. Paul expressly applies to our Saviour's Ascension, *Eph. 4. 8. and Ps. 24. is almost all of it a prophetical Description of this*  
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Ascension, and is therefore very fitly appointed by our Church, to be Read upon that Day, which we set apart for the Commemoration of it. To the same effect, is that Prophecy of *Isai. chap. 63. 1.* where the Prophet describes the Holy Host of Heaven rejoicing and wondering at the Glorious Ascension of our Lord into those everlasting Mansions. *Who is this, say they, that cometh from Edom, with died Garments from Bozrah? This that is Glorious in his Apparel, travelling in the greatness of his Strength? I that speak in Righteousness, mighty to Save.* And as our Saviour's Ascension was typified and foretold in the Old Testament, so we find that all those Types and Prophecies were made good, and fulfilled in the New. There we have a most faithful and punctual Account, as of his Nativity, his Passion, his Resurrection from the Dead, so likewise of his Ascension into Heaven. This we find that our Saviour himself plainly foretold some Days before it came to pass; *Go to my Brethren, saith he to Mary Magdalen, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father and your Father, and to my God and your God, Joh. 20. 17.* And when this was to be fulfilled, that there might not want sufficient Witnesses to attest the truth of his Ascension, the Evangelist *St. Luke* tells us, That when he was about to ascend up to his Father, he led his Disciples out as far as to *Bethany*; and that there he lift up his Hands and Blessed them; and that while he Blessed them, he was parted from them, and carried up into Heaven. But still further, lest any should doubt, notwithstanding our Saviour's being visibly parted from his Disciples, and received up into the Air, whether he did really ascend into Heaven or not, to remove all



all manner of occasion, of such doubting God immediately sends two Angels from Heaven to certify them that he was really ascended thither: for the story tells us, *Acts* 1. 10. *That while they looked stedfastly toward Heaven as he went up, behold two men stood by them in white Apparel; which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into Heaven? This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into Heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into Heaven.* Now there remains no ground at all of doubting whether our Saviour be really ascended into Heaven, or no, since what the Apostle's eyes were not able visibly to behold, the Testimony of two Angels hath undeniably confirmed. Thus much briefly of my first particular, that Christ our Redeemer is truly and really ascended into Heaven, *i.e.* that his humane Nature, both Body and Soul, are actually by the Omnipotent Power of his God-head translated into the highest Heavens.

The next thing to be considered is, that he is ascended into Heaven as our High-priest. It is true, that Christ ascended into Heaven for his own sake as well as for ours. For surely, he that for the expiation of God's Wrath had humbled himself so low, he that had wrought so glorious a Work as the Redemption of Mankind, and that by undergoing most bitter and unconceivable Sufferings did highly deserve to be exalted to the Right-hand of his Heavenly Father. And therefore he himself saith that these sufferings of his were the way to his glory. *Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?* *Luke* 24. 26. But although Christ ascended into Heaven for himself, that he might  
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take possession of that Kingdom which he had justly deserved; yet he ascended thither for us also: As at his Resurrection he arose from the dead not for himself only, but for us also, and became *the First-fruits of them that slept*, so likewise at his Ascension he passed into the Heavens; as our High-priest, by virtue of whose Ascension all his Elect shall ascend up after him unto the same place of Glory and Immortality. This is evident from these words of my Text, *Seeing then that we have a great High priest, that is passed into the Heavens, Jesus the Son of God. This the Scripture testifies frequently in other places. We have such an High-priest, saith our Apostle, who is set on the Right-hand of the Throne of the Majesty in the Heavens; a Minister of the Sanctuary, and of the true Tabernacle which the Lord pitched and not Man, Heb. 8. 1. 2. and c. 6. 20.* he tells us that *the Fore-runner is for us entred into that within the Veil, even Jesus, made an High-priest for ever after the order of Melchisedeck.* Now the office of Christ our High-priest consists chiefly in these things. 1. In being our Advocate to make intercession for us to the Father. *If any man sin, saith S. John, we have an Advocate with the Father Jesus Christ the righteous, 1 Joh. 2. 1: and who is he that condemneth? saith S. Paul. It is Christ that died; yea rather that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us. Rom. 8. 34.* How great a favour how inestimable a benefit is this to have the only beloved Son of God in whom he is well pleased, and to whom he will deny, nothing continually to plead and make intercession for us unto his Father! They only are truly sensible of this Blessing who are wounded with the Arrows of the Almighty,

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and pressed sore with his hand, so that there is no soundness in their flesh, because of his anger, neither any rest in their Bones because of their Sin, They find the benefit of such an Intercession, and how desperate and remediless their condition would be, had they not such an High-priest that is ever ready upon their true Repentance to make an atonement for them, to plead the merit of his sufferings in their behalf, and to interpose betwixt them and the wrath of God.

2. Christ ascended into Heaven as our High-priest, that being thither ascended he might send unto us the Comforter, even the Holy Ghost to abide with us for ever. This was one main reason of his Ascension, as himself declares to his Disciples. *John 16. 7. Nevertheless, I tell you the truth. It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you.* This he had promised long before by the prophet *Joel c. 2. of that Prophecy, v. 28. It shall come to pass, saith he, that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh, and your Sons and your Daughters shall prophesie, your old men shall dream Dreams, your young men shall see Visions.* This promise he fulfilled upon his Apostles upon the day of Pentecost, *Acts 2.* and he performs it dayly to all his elect continually begetting and increasing in their hearts the Graces of his Holy Spirit by the Ministry of his word. This is that blessed Spirit of truth that guides us into all truth and teaches us all things, that bears witness with our Spirits that we are the children of God, and seals us unto the day of Redemption; and this Holy Spirit Christ as our High-priest sends unto us from Heaven. For although he be  
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present every where, in respect of his Divine Essence, which is Omnipresent; yet by his gracious Operation, he is present only in the Hearts of his Elect, unto whom he is sent by Christ as a Pledge of his Love, to abide with them *for ever*. *The third Office which Christ performs for us, as our High-priest is, to prepare a place for us in Heaven.* The Sin of *Adam* had shut the Gate of Heaven against us: For nothing that is Defiled or Unclean shall enter into the New *Jerusalem*; but Christ by his perfect Obedience, and by his meritorious Sufferings for our Sakes, hath Expiated the Guilt of this Sin; and by his ascending up thither himself, hath opened unto us the Gate of Heaven again, and given us assurance that he will draw us up after him. This he promised to his Disciples, *Joh. 14. 2. I go, saith he, to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto my self; that where I am, there ye may be also.* Thus is Christ ascended into Heaven as our High-priest, he is gone thither before us to prepare a place for us; a place of endless Bliss and Felicity in those glorious Mansions of his Heavenly Father. And so I have done with the Doctrinal part of my Text, and shewed you that Christ is really ascended into Heaven, and that he is ascended thither as our High-priest.

I come now to the last Thing I propounded, which is, to press to you the Apostles Application; and to shew you how strongly the Consideration of this Doctrine should oblige us to hold fast our Profession. And what can oblige us more to hold fast our Profession, to lead a Godly and a Christian Life, and to have our Conversation in Heaven,  
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than this; that we have a great High-priest, Jesus the Son of God, that is already passed into the Heavens, on purpose to prepare for us there an Everlasting Crown of Glory? The consideration of the blessed Effects of the Ascension of our Lord, if we make a right use of it, will enable us to fight the good fight of Faith with Courage, to keep our selves unspotted of the World in whatsoever Circumstances we are, and to steer our Course aright through all the manifold Changes and Chances of this Mortal Life, till we arrive at the end of our Hope, even the Salvation of our Souls. Let our Condition be what it will, good or bad, I say, the thoughts of this will enable us to behave our selves so, as shall be most for the Glory of God, and our own Good. For, first, Hath God Blessed us with Peace and Prosperity in this World? Hath he given us a plentiful Portion of the good Things of this Life? Hath he heaped upon us Riches and Honour, filled our Barns with Plenty, and caused *our Presses to burst out with new Wine*? Though these things are strong Temptations, and very apt to alienate our Hearts from God, yet the consideration of our Saviour's Ascension will enable us to overcome them. If in the midst of these worldly Blessings, we frequently and seriously call to mind, that we have a great High-priest, that is preparing for us things that are incomparably better, and more glorious in Heaven; our Eyes then will not be dazzled, nor our Hearts bewitched, with these fading and perishing Enjoyments upon Earth: We shall set no higher an Estimate upon them than they deserve, but shall be careful to use them with a Christian Prudence and Moderation, to the glory of God, and the good  
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of our Selves; and such poor Members of Christ as we see stand in need of our *Charity*. We shall look upon all these temporal Blessings to be but only lent us for a time; but our Hearts and Affections will be wholly fixed with most ardent and longing Desires upon that eternal and incorruptible Inheritance which our High-priest hath purchased for us *in Heaven*. Thus I say, if in this World God hath blessed us with Wealth and Honour, the consideration of our Saviour's Ascension will be a powerful means to restrain us from the abuse of those Blessings; so that we shall neither Idolize our Wealth with the Covetous, nor with the Prodigal waste and consume it upon our Lusts: But shall wisely improve it to our best advantage, so as to make to our selves friends of the Mammon of Unrighteousness. Secondly, On the contrary, hath God dealt otherwise with us? Hath he with-held these Blessings from us? Is our Condition in this World very Poor and Mean, so that we have not where-withal to help our selves, but are fain to be beholding both for Food and Raiment, and whatsoever is necessary to the support of our Lives to our richer Neighbours? The consideration of our Saviour's Ascension into Heaven will exceedingly comfort us, and support our Spirits in the midst of our Want and Penury. For how can we be troubled at our low Fortune in this World, when we remember that we have an High-priest in Heaven, that hath a Crown of Glory in his Hand ready to put on our Heads, as soon as our Earthly Tabernacle is dissolved? Nay, more than this, is our Condition here yet worse? Are we not only Poor and Despicable, but are we moreover Persecuted for Righteousness sake? Doth  
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the World frown upon us, and rage against us with all its Fury? Let us not be discouraged for all this: And we cannot be, if we consider, as it follows in the Verse after my Text, that in Heaven *we have not an High-priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our Infirmities; but was in all points tempted, like as we are, yet without Sin.* He himself, when he was here on Earth, was so Poor, that he had not an House wherein to lay his Head. He was all his Life long a Man of Sorrows, and acquainted with Grief, and was at the last most cruelly and despihtfully Persecuted even unto Death. And as he himself *was for the suffering of Death, crowned with Glory and Honour,* so hath he promised the same Reward to all those that suffer for his sake. *Blessed are they which are Persecuted for Righteousness sake: For theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven, Matth. 5. 10.* How then can Persecution seem grievous to us, when we consider that we suffer for our High-priest, who hath suffered far greater and bitterer Torments for us, than we can do for him, and who now sits on the Right Hand of God, ready to make us a vast amends for our light and momentary Affliction here, by bestowing upon us *a far more exceeding and eternal weight of Glory?* Thus powerful is the Meditation of our Saviour's Ascension, to guide and direct us, to make us wary and cautious in Prosperity, and to strengthen and comfort us, and to make us patient and couragious in Adversity, and to arm and fortifie us both against the smiles and frowns of the World. Nay, Secondly, When Death it self approaches near us, when the King of Terrors is ready to seize upon us, the same Meditation will make us bid that Hour welcome,

come, when we consider that we have an High-priest in Heaven, that hath swallowed up Death in Victory, so that to all true Believers it is now but asleep, the Gate through which we must enter into Eternal Life. Again, Thirdly, Which is worse than Death, and which is the very sting and poison of Death it self; are we at any time terrified and affrighted at the sight of any grievous Sin, into which, by the Temptation of the Devil, and through our own Lusts we have fallen? Is our Soul smitten into the place of Dragons, and brought down as it were even to Hell with the dreadful apprehension of the Wrath of God, which thereby we have justly deserved? Let not the Devil (who in such a Case, is ever ready to do it) perswade us to Despair, that there is no hopes of Mercy for us, but that now God hath hid his Face from us for ever, and that he will be no more intreated by us. But let us say with the *Psalmist*, *Why art thou cast down, O my Soul, and why art thou disquieted within me? Hope thou in God: For I shall yet praise him, who is the health of my Countenance, and my God.* Let us remember, that tho' we have sinned, yet we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the Righteous, and he is the Propitiation for our Sins. Let us remember, that tho' we have sinned, yet we have a great High-priest, that is passed into the Heavens, Jesus the Son of God, who ever lives to make Intercession for us. Let us not therefore Despair, but Repent. *Let us, trusting in the Merits and Righteousness of our High-priest, come boldly, tho' humbly and penitently, to the Throne of Grace, that we may obtain Mercy, and find Grace to help in time of need.* And if we do so come, we may assure our selves,

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that we shall find both Grace and Mercy. Not one Tear that proceeds from godly Sorrow shall drop to the ground, not one penitential Sigh shall be breathed in vain, but our High-priest will be sure to present all our Tears, our Sighs, our Prayers and Supplications before his Father, and never cease his Intercession in our behalf, until our Pardon be Sealed in Heaven. *Thus you see that in whatsoever Circumstances we are engaged, the Meditation of our Saviour's Ascension is ever extremely beneficial to our Souls.* And seeing that it is so, how should it oblige us to hold fast our Profession? How should the thoughts of this, as they are ever profitable, so be ever welcome and dear unto us? Let us not then set up our Staff on this side *Jordan*, let us not lie groveling upon Earth, nor suffer our selves to be enamoured of the Things of this World, which are not worthy of our Thoughts; but let us seek those Things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the Right Hand of God. Let us remember, that here we are but Strangers and Pilgrims, and therefore let us behave our selves so as becomes Sojourners; using this World so as if we used it not, knowing that our own Native Country, where we expect our Inheritance, is afar off, even in Heaven, whither our High-priest is passed before us to prepare a place for us. Oh then! if we desire hereafter to ascend up thither after him, that we may for ever be Happy in his Presence, let us now hold fast our Profession: That we may be able at that great Day to meet the Lord in the Air, and to ascend up with him into Heaven; let us now Purifie our selves, even as he is Pure. *Let us lay aside every Weight, and the Sin which doth so easily beset us, and let*

*let us run with patience the Race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our Faith; who, for the Joy that was set before him, endured the Cross, despising the Shame, and is set down at the Right Hand of the Throne of God. Let us continually lift up our Hearts with most devout and ardent Affections unto him, who is our Prophet, our Priest, and our King; yielding as far as we are able an intire and impartial Obedience to all his Laws, submitting our Selves wholly to his Will, and to the guidance of his Holy Spirit in all Things. So when this King of Glory shall come again with the Keys of Heaven and Hell in his Hands, to render unto every Man according to his Works, he shall open for us those everlasting Doors, through which he himself is already passed as our Fore-runner, and place us in those happy Mansions of Bliss and Joy, which he hath prepared for us, where we shall be Kings and Priests unto God for ever. Unto which unconceivable Glory and Honour, &c.*

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# S E R M O N VII.

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MATT. XI. 28.

*Come unto me, all ye that Labour, and are heavy Laden, and I will give you Rest.*

**G**REAT Travel is created for every Man, (saith the Son of Sirach, Eccles. 40. 1.) and an heavy Yoke is upon the Sons of Adam, from the Day that they go out of their Mother's Womb, till the Day that they return to the Mother of all Things. Their imagination of Things to come, and the Day of Death trouble their Thoughts, and cause fear of Heart; from him that sitteth on a Throne of Glory, unto him that is humbled in Earth and Ashes; from him that weareth Purple and a Crown, unto him that is clothed with a Linen Frock. This is the sad Condition of all the Sons of Men by Nature; an unhappy Patrimony entailed upon us by the first Adam's Disobedience, and from which nothing but the perfect Righteousness, and satisfaction of the second Adam can deliver us. The former utterly ruined and undid us, when we were once Happy: The latter came on purpose to seek and to save us, when we were lost. The former hung upon our Necks, the heavy and intolerable



nable Yoke of Satan ; a Burden under which the whole Creation groans, and which, if we shake it not off, will at the last sink us down into the bottomless Pit : The latter came to rescue us from this Bondage, and to lay upon us a Yoke indeed too, but such a Yoke that should be so far from pinching and oppressing us, that it should exalt us, and draw us up with it even to the highest Heavens, a Yoke that should be light and easie to us at the present, and that should procure for us Eternal Rest and Felicity hereafter. And here in my Text he makes a most gracious Invitation, and a promise of Refreshment to every Man, that finding himself thus Burdened and Oppressed, will come unto him for help. *Come unto me all ye, &c.*

In the handling of which Words, we will consider these three Things. First, Who they are that are here invited. Secondly, Unto whom they are invited. Thirdly, For what end they are invited. First, Then they to whom this Invitation is made, are they *that Labour, and are heavy Laden* ; and that not some few of them only, but all without any exception ; all such are welcome Guests unto Christ. *Come unto me, saith he, all ye that Labour, and are heavy Laden.* This Invitation then seems to be made without respect of Persons, to all Mankind : For nothing is more certain, than that all Mankind is heavy laden with the burden of Sin, which is the Thing here meant in these Words. This is so evident from innumerable Texts of Scripture, that I need not produce Arguments to prove it : *For all have sinned, and come short of the Glory of God.* But tho' nothing be more plain than that all have sinned, and

consequently that all are laden with this Burden ; yet nothing is more plain also, than that all do not Labour under it. Many Men, indeed, most Men, are so far from labouring under the Burden of Sin, that they delight and take pleasure in it, and can by no means be perswaded to think of parting with it. Such Persons as these are so far from seeking Rest, in being eased of their Sins, that on the contrary, they seek for Rest and Happiness in Sin it self, where it is certain that it never can be found : For *there is no Peace saith my God to the Wicked.* Such therefore are excluded from this Invitation of our Saviour, who, tho' he calls Sinners unto him, yet calls none but such as are weary of their Sins, and desire to be delivered from them. Secondly, Such are excluded likewise, who trust in their own Righteousness, and presume that they have little or no need of a Saviour. Such were the Pharisees of Old, of whom our Lord gives us a Character, *Luk. 18. 11.* in the Example of the Pharisee that justified himself, and despised the Publican, praying on this manner, *God, I thank thee, that I am not as other Men are, Extortioners, Unjust, Adulterers, or even as this Publican. I fast twice in the Week; I give Tithes of all that I Possess.* And such are those of the Church of Rome at this Day, who presume that they can merit Heaven by their own Works : nay, more than so, that they can do Works of Supererrogation, and sell them also for the benefit of others that stand in need of them, contrary to the expresse Command of our Saviour to his Disciples, *Luk. 17. 10.* *When ye have done all those Things which are commanded you, say, We are unprofitable Servants : We have done that which was our Duty to do ; and contrary*

trary to the Example of the wise Virgins, *Matt. 25. 9.* who refused to part with any of their Oyl unto the Foolish ; *lest there be not enough*, say they, *for us and you : But go ye rather to them that sell, and buy for your selves.* Such Persons as these then, both such as delight in Sin, and such as trust in their own Righteousness, are utterly excluded from this Invitation of our Saviour : There is no Promise, no hopes of Rest for any such. But all they that would be welcome Guests unto Christ, must be sensible of the heavy Load and Burden of their Sins, so as to be heartily weary of it, and most earnestly to desire to be rid of it. So that here is a double Qualification required in all those Persons, whom Christ here so graciously calls unto him. First, They must feel the Burden of their Sins, so as to Labour under it, to be extremely wearied and oppressed with it. Secondly, They must unfeignedly desire to be rid of this Burthen, so as to be delivered not only from the Punishment that is due unto Sin ; but from the Guilt also and Pollution of Sin, that it may no longer reign *in their mortal Body, that they should obey it in the Lusts thereof.*

*First*, I say, all that will come unto Christ, must feel the burthen of their Sins, so as to labour under it, and to be extremely wearied and oppressed with it. This is evident from the express Words of our Saviour's Invitation here in my Text, *Come unto me, all ye that labour, and are heavy laden.* Now that Sin is a most intolerable and insupportable Burthen, must needs appear to all Men that will seriously consider it upon these two Accounts.

1. From the danger of it.
2. From the foulness and loathsomeness of it.

First, That Sin is of all

things the most dangerous is acknowledged by all men that believe that there is a God who as he is a rewarder of all them that diligently seek him, so he is a God also to who vengeance belongs, that will by no means clear the guilty, but will turn the wicked and all that forget him into Hell. All the Miseries both of this life and of that which is to come are the effects and consequence of Sin : what dismal plagues and judgments it renders us obnoxious to in this world we read at large, *Dent. 28.* and, *Lev. 26.* It brings a curse upon our selves and all that belongs to us in all places whithersoever we go, in all Business whatsoever we undertake; a curse in the city, and a curse in the field, a curse upon our basket and our store, upon the fruit of our Body, and the fruit of our land, the increase of our kine and the flocks of our sheep. It brings upon us War, Famine, Pestilence, a trembling heart, and failing of eyes, and sorrow of mind : so that our life shall hang in doubt before us, and we shall fear day and night, and shall have none assurance of our life. In the Morning we shall say, would God it were Even ; and at even we shall say, would God it were Morning : for the fear of our heart wherewith we shall fear, and for the sight of our eyes which we shall see. This, and much more than this is the danger of Sin in this life, as ye may see in the Chapters before-mentioned. And surely this, if there were no more might be enough to satisfy us, that Sin is a burden under which no man living is able to stand upright. And yet all this is but the beginning of sorrow, is nothing in comparison of that misery which Sin will certainly bring upon all those that forsake it not in the world to come. *There shall be weeping, and wailing, and gnashing of teeth.*  
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Those torments as they shall be incomparably greater than what any man can suffer in this life as to extremity of pain, so they shall be infinitely greater in one respect for they shall know no end; but when thereprobate Men and Angels shall have lien in Hell ten thousand thousand times as many Millions of ages as there are drops of water in the Ocean or grains of dust in the Body of the Earth, their punishment will still be as far from an end as it was at the begining : for all this is but a moment to eternity ; still *their worm dies not, neither is their fire quenched ; but the smoke of their torment ascends up for ever and ever, and they have no rest day nor night.* Surely this then if there were no other argument might of it self be sufficient to convince us that Sin is a most intolerable burden, since it will inevitably sink us into so unconceivable and remediless Misery. But secondly that it is such a burden will appear further from the consideration of the foulness and loathsomeness of it : and this is so exceeding great, that indeed nothing in the world is really and truly filthy and abominable but Sin it self. For although there be many of God's creatures (as for example a Toad, or a Serpent, or the like) which by some secret antipathy in this our lapsed Estate we cannot chuse but abhor the sight of ; yet the most noisome Vermin that the Earth affords is so far from being filthy and ugly , that if rightly understood it is quite contrary, being created by God for wise and gracious purposes : for Moses tells us in the beginning of *Genesis*, that *he saw every thing that he had made ; and behold it was very good.* If therefore any of God's Creatures appear to us to be otherwise, it is purely through the fault of our corrupt reason  
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which is apt to take a false estimate of things. But that Sin is a most foul and loathsome thing cannot but be granted by any one that seriously considers it, since it is most directly contrary and opposite to the Nature of God, who is the most perfect, wise, good, and glorious Being in the world ; who cannot be deceived or biased by any prejudice or partiality ; but passes a true and just censure upon all things. And he hath declared in his word, that Sin is a most filthy and abominable evil, that it is a most offensive stink in his Nostrils ; and that he abhors and hates it with an irreconcilable and eternal hatred. How pleasant soever therefore Sin may seem to us whose understanding is darkened, and whose reason is enslaved and led captive by our unruly lusts and passion, so that it is of it self utterly unable to judge aright of any thing it is notwithstanding most certain and undeniable that Sin is the most foul and loathsome thing in the World, seeing it is pronounced to be so by God himself who is infinitely wise and cannot be deceived and infinitely good and cannot hate any thing but what is evil. From these 2 considerations then it is sufficiently evident that Sin is a most intolerable burden, both upon the account of the danger of it and the foulness of it. The foulness of it is such that God is not able to endure it in his sight : for he is of purer Eyes than to behold iniquity : and the danger of it is such, that it will certainly plunge us into such misery as the heart of man is not able to conceive. He therefore that hath taken this strict and impartial survey of Sin, and finds that himself is guilty of it, will soon be ready to cry out with David : *Mine iniquities are gone over mine head :*

*as an heavy burthen they are too heavy for me. My wounds stink and are corrupt, because of my foolishness. I am troubled, I am bowed down greatly: I go mourning all the day long. For my loyns are filled with a loathsome disease; and there is no soundness in my flesh, Ps. 38. 4. &c. Or he will complain with S. Paul, O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the Body of this death? Rom. 7. 24. But though the case of every one of us be thus bad, yet it is not desperate to any man that is thus truly sensible of his condition, that feels the weight of his burden and desires to be eased of it. For behold a Deliverer is ready at hand, one that is mighty to save; one that is both able and willing to help us, and hath here in my Text made this gracious invitation with his own mouth to all men that are thus qualified to come unto him. Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden.*

And so I proceed to the second thing I propounded to speak of, which is the Person unto whom we are invited to come for help, and that is Christ. And here we must understand that by coming unto Christ is not meant any corporeal approach, as if we were obliged to see him with our Eyes, or to touch him with our hands: for alas how can we that are but worms upon earth come thus unto him who is exalted unto the Right-hand of God in the highest Heavens? But though we cannot come thus to him, yet we may come nearer to him than thus; even so near as to be one with him, to be *members of his Body, of his flesh, and of his bones*, Eph. 5. 30. And this is that coming unto Christ, which is here meant in my Text, a coming to him and laying hold on him by a true and lively faith. This is the only way that we can

can come unto Christ, so as to receive any benefit from him. For as his hands were tied while he was here upon Earth, so that he could not work any Miracles where he found not faith; so are they tied still upon the same account now he is in Heaven; so that he cannot save us, he cannot ease us of our Burden, except we believe: we have his own word for it, *Mark 16. 16. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.* And if this be all that is required of us in coming to Christ, to believe that *Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners*, and to acknowledge our selves to be such, who then shall not be saved? surely then the way to Heaven is much easier than it is generally represented to be, and few there be that shall not find it. But our blessed Saviour hath assured us of the contrary and told us expressly, that *few there be that shall find it*, *Matth. 7. 14.* And therefore it is more than a bare historical faith that is required of us, if we will come unto Christ aright, so as to find rest unto our souls: and this is plain from the words in the Verse after my Text: *Take my Yoke upon you and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your Souls.* Here is something implied more than just coming unto Christ: for we must not only come to him but we must resolve also to do something for him, which he expects we should do, if ever we look for salvation from him: and that is to be obedient to those most holy Laws, and to follow as far as we are able through the Assistance of his Grace, that most excellent Example which in his last Will and Testament he hath left us for the Rule of our Life and Conversation. I will  
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not deny but that it is faith alone by which we are justified and saved : for S. Paul tells us more than once in his Epistles, that *the just shall live by faith*. But then he tells us what this faith is, Gal. 5. 6. It is *faith which works by love*, and 1 Thess. 1. 3. he calls it *the work of faith, and Labour of Love*. If then faith be a work it must needs be more than a bare assent to, and belief of, the truth of the Gospel, together with a groundless application of the promises therein contained to our selves ; which too many men are apt to think to be a faith sufficient to salvation. For what work is this, to believe the truth of a Store when there are most unanswerable Arguments to prove it? though indeed it is a work, and an hard work too ; the Devils work to perswade us to apply those precious promises which are made in that sacred Story to our selves, when they do not at all concern us. Let us take heed therefore of deceiving our selves, and thinking that we have faith when we have it not : but if we desire to approve our faith in the sight of God, and Men, and Angels, and to the quiet and satisfaction of our own Consciences, let us follow the advice both of S. James and S. Peter. The former tells us that *Faith without works is dead*, and that *by works Faith is made perfect*. And the latter upon the substantial, and never failing, foundation of a true faith raises a most noble Structure by which we may gradually ascend into those Mansions of Glory which our blessed Saviour hath prepared for all those that love his appearing, 2 Peter 1. 5. Add, saith he, to your faith virtue, and to virtue knowledge, and to knowledge temperance, and to temperance patience, and to patience godliness, and to godliness brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness

ness charity. For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But he that lacketh these things, i. e. any one of them, is blind and cannot see a far off and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old Sins. Wherefore the rather brethren give Diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things ye shall never fall. For so an entrance shall be ministred unto you abundantly into the everlasting knigdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. From hence ye may plainly see that the faith which is here meant by coming unto Christ, is more than a bare belief of the truth of the Gospel, more than a bare recumbency and leaning upon Christ for Salvation, and applying his Merits to our selves as it were at a venture right or wrong, whether we have any interest in him or no. Such a faith as this many men trust to, that have been strangers all their lifetime to the perfect Law of Liberty, by which S. James tells us that we must all be judged at the last. But the faith which our Saviour here requires in all that come unto him, implies, besides, a full and steadfast belief of all that is contained in the Gospel, a firm purpose and resolution, and a chearful endeavour to the best of our power throughout the whole course of our Life, to be obedient and conformable to all those rules, and precepts, and Laws which the Gospel enjoyns us to perform, to imitate that most holy example which our blessed Lord hath sett us, striving to be perfect as he was perfect; and when we have done all this, still to acknowledge that we are unprofitable servants, utterly disowning any Merits or Righteousness in our selves; but desiring with S. Paul to be  
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## Sermon Seventh.

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*found in Christ, not having our own Righteousness which is of the Law, but that which is through the Faith of Christ, the Righteousness which is of God by faith, Phil. 3. 9.* This is a true and saving Faith indeed: and whosoever thus comes unto Christ, may assure himself that he shall be heartily welcome; he shall most certainly obtain the benefit of this invitation and *shall find rest unto his Soul.*

And this brings me to my third and last particular, which is the end wherefore all that labour and are heavy laden with the burthen of their Sins, are invited to come unto Christ: and that is that he may give them rest. Ye have already heard that there is no burden so intolerable as that of Sin; and the rest which Christ here promises to give to them that come unto him in that manner, which I have shewed you, is a freedom from this burden, and from all the dreadfull consequents and effects of it; a freedom from the anguish of an afflicted conscience, from the insupportable troubles of a wounded Spirit, that is smitten with *the arrows of the Almighty* from the wrath of God, and from the Torments of Hell; from the guilt of Sin, and from its punishment. And this Christ doth by taking the burden of their Sins upon himself and making a full satisfaction for them unto the Divine Justice. For the *Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all, Isa. 53. 6.* And God made him to be sin for us, saith S. Paul, *who knew no Sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him, 2 Cor. 5. 21.* And he that by a true faith applies these Merits of Christ's Death, and passion to himself, he hath already obtained this rest which Christ here promises; he is delivered from the burden of his Sins, and from that vengeance  
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which is due unto them. This rest therefore is, in a word, our justification in the sight of God by which purely for the sake of the Merits of Jesus Christ, we are acquitted and absolved of all our Sins, and are reconciled to God. *Being justified by faith*, saith the Apostle, *we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ*, Rom. 5. 1. This is that peace which passes all understanding; a peace which nothing can disturb or interrupt, but it will always continue firm and unshaken among all the changes, and chances of this mortal life: and when we shall have most need of it it will stand us in greatest stead. When we walk through the valley of the shadow of death it will not leave us; but will bear us company even before the Tribunal of Christ, and will enable us to lift up our Heads with joy in that great day when the whole World shall tremble, and will at the last conduct us into those glorious regions of rest and happiness which the Prince of peace hath purchased for us. Thus ye see who they be that are here invited, unto whom they are invited, and for what end. Sad and disconsolate Sinners that are oppressed with the weight of their Sins are invited by Christ, to come and cast that insupportable burden upon him who alone is able to bear it and instead thereof to receive from him the most blessed rest and peace imaginable. What remains then but that with most ardent prayers we continually besiege the Throne of Grace, and beg of God that he would open our eyes by the Grace of his H. Spirit (without whom we can do nothing that is good) that so we may discern both the Misery of Sin with which by nature we are laden, and the blessedness of that peace which by the grace of Christ,

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we may obtain. And when we once do discern these things let us immediately without any delay run unto Christ for help. Let us not seek for this peace from any one else but from him who alone hath promised it to us, and who alone is able to give it us. Let us not seek it in the vain Pumps and Pleasures of this present World : for all that this world can do for us without this peace will do us no good ; and with it all that it can do against us will do us no harm. Let us not ( as the Papists do ) seek for it from any merit or righteousness in ourselves: for *all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags* : neither let us ( as they do likewise ) seek for it to Saints, or Angels, or Archangels : for the Angels refuse our Worship, and own themselves to be but our Fellow-servants; as is evident by two plain instances in the Revelation, *Chap. 19. 10. and 22. 9.* And as for the Saints, *Abraham* though he be the father of the faithfull, yet *he is ignorant of us, and Israel knows us not.* Nay the blessed Virgin her self, though the Papists blasphemously call her the Queen of Heaven, and pray to her not only to intreat but to command her Son in their behalf, doubtless could she hear such Prayers as these, and had leave to answer them, she would presently send such Persons as these to Christ, and give them no other answer from Heaven than what she gave to the Servants at the Marriage-Feast in *Cana of Galilee*, while she was upon earth, *John 2. 5.* *Whatsoever he saith unto you do it.* Let us therefore acquiesce in this answer of hers, as if it were an Oracle from Heaven; and instead of seeking either to her or any other Person for salvation, let us come unto *the Lamb of God which taketh away the Sins of the World, even to*

Christ himself who hath invited us and whatsoever he saith unto us in his Gospel let us do it. Thus, if we come unto him we shall be sure to find him ready to receive us, and to perform unto us this gracious promise which he hath here made in my Text: he will give us in this World peace of conscience and joy in the Holy Ghost, and in the World to come everlasting joy and rest in his Heavenly Kingdom.

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 SERMON VIII.
 

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COL. II. 18, 19.

*Let no Man beguile you of your Reward,  
in a voluntary Humility, and worship-  
ping of Angels, intruding into those  
things which he hath not seen, vainly  
puffed up by his fleshly Mind ;  
And not holding the Head, from which  
all the Body by Joints and Bands ha-  
ving Nourishment ministred, and knit  
together, increaseth with the Increase  
of God.*

**T**H E S E words are such a plain and di-  
rect Prohibition of Angel-worship, ( and  
consequently of Saint-worship too ) that  
it is one of the greatest wonders in the World,  
that there should be found in it a Christian  
Church, that styles her self Catholick, ( and that  
in so arrogant a manner as to appropriate that  
Title to her self exclusively to all Christian Churches



ches in the World besides) and yet in open and hostile Opposition of this Text of Scripture should not only allow of the Worship of Angels and Saints as lawful, but proceed so far as to impose it upon all Men as a necessary Article of Faith, anathematizing all that will not join with her in it. But these things must be, that the Scriptures may be fulfilled. For certainly whosoever laying aside all Prejudice, and Partiality, and Hypocrisie, devoutly and seriously consults the Holy Oracles of God, will find in the Writings of the New Testament, as plain and punctual a Prediction and Description of Antichrist, both as to the time and manner of his Coming, and his Behaviour and Reception in the World, as in the Old Testament there is of the *Messias*; and seeing both exactly foretold, will not think it a greater wonder, that by one part of the World the Man of Sin should be worshipped as a Saint, than that by another the Holy One of God should be rejected as an Impostour. For the blessed Spirit of Truth, who alone can guide us into all Truth, hath told us *expresly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the Faith, giving heed to seducing Spirits, and Doctrines of Dæmons.* That there shall arise a great one in the Earth, that shall oppose and exalt himself above all, that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God, shall sit in the Temple of God, shewing himself that he is God. *Whose coming shall be after the working of Satan, with all Power, and Signs, and lying Wonders, and with all Deceivableness of Unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the Love of the Truth, that they might be saved. And that for this cause God shall send them strong Delusion, that they should believe*

*believe a lye, that they all might be damned who believed not the Truth, but had pleasure in Unrighteousness.* And since this Prophecy must needs be fulfilled, it was highly necessary that the Holy Ghost should forewarn us to beware of all those false Doctrines, and corrupt and abominable Practices, which this grand Impostour should endeavour to obtrude upon the Church of Christ as necessary to Salvation; one of which the Apostle cautions us against in the words of my Text. *Let no Man beguile you of your Reward, &c.*

The Text in the Original is something difficult, and hath therefore occasioned some difference in Translations; though none so great, but that any one of them that I have seen, and I have consulted several) contains as direct a Prohibition of the Worshipping of Angels, as the Greek it self: For whether we render the word *καταλαβετε*, *Let no Man judge against you*, as Beza, or, *Let no Man condemn you*, as Diodate, or, *Let no Man master, or govern you*, as the French; or, *Let no Man seduce you*, as the Vulgar Latin, and the Rhemish Translation; or, *Let no Man beguile you of your Reward*, as our Translatours have rendered it, it comes all to one and the same thing, *viz.* that no Man upon Earth hath any Power to impose upon us the Worship of Angels; but whosoever goeth about to do so puts a dangerous cheat upon us, to the hazarding of our Eternal Salvation. The main difference that I can observe consists in joining the word *δέλων* (as it may be indifferently) either to the preceeding, or following words. If we join it to the words that go before it, the Sense will be this; *Let no man beguile you of your Reward*, or condemn, or master, or seduce you willingly, ar-

bitrarily, usurping over you a Power and Authority which was never committed unto him ; and so they will look with a malignant Aspect upon his Holinesses pretended Supremacy. If we join it to the words that follow it, the Sense will be, as our Translatours have rendered it ; *in a voluntary humility, or being a voluntary in humility* ; and so the Worship of Angels will appear to be but Will-worship, having no Foundation in Scripture. These things being premised, I shall confine my self to our English Translation, which in my Judgment is of all that I have seen, the most faithfully rendered according to the Original, and out of the words of my Text I shall observe this ; that no Man whatsoever hath any Authority to impose upon us the Worship of Angels being a thing absolutely unlawful and repugnant to the Will of God, for the proof of which proposition ( besides some other Arguments which we may produce ) the Apostle furnishes us with four in my Text. 1. This Worship of Angels is a false and voluntary Humility, a Will-worship invented by Man, not enjoined by God. 2. It proceeds from a real and carnal Pride : He that goes about to impose it upon us, *intrudes into those things which he hath not seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind.* 3. It is highly injurious to the incommunicable Honour and Prerogative of our Lord Jesus Christ : they that are guilty of it *hold not the Head.* 4. It is destructive and deadly to our own Souls, and the End of it will be Damnation ; for he that prevails with us to join in this Worship, *beguiles us of our Reward.*

*First,* This Worship of Angels is a false and voluntary Humility, a Will-worship invented by Man,  
and

and not enjoyed by God. Of all the Temptations with which Satan is wont to assault our Souls, there are none so dangerous as those which he offers to us under colour of Religion. The common Baits of sensual Pleasures of worldly Profit, or Honour, and the like, smell so rank of the old Serpent, that he that hath but half an Eye may discern that there is an Hook under them ; and it is merely the Predominance of his Corruptions that prevails with any Man to swallow it. But when he assumes the Habit of an Angel of Light, when instead of tempting us to Vice he recommends to us some extraordinary Grace and Virtue, as being not yet fully understood nor practised by us, according to the true intent and meaning of the Gospel, it is not every Man that will look for a cloven Foot, nor be able to discover it under such a sanctified Disguise, and it is no marvel, that even some learned Men have been imposed upon by the Stratagem. Now of all those Excellent Graces which the Gospel requires of us, there is none more lovely and amiable, none that doth more adorn and beautifie our Souls, and renders them more pleasing and acceptable in the sight of God through the Merits of Christ, than Humility ; and therefore no Temptation could be more likely to prevail with Persons inclinable to Devotion, than one that was gilded with the specious Pretence and Shew of so incomparable a Virtue. Upon this plausible Foundation the grand Enemy of our Salvation, established the Worship of Angels among some Hereticks very early, even in the Apostles Time ; which was the occasion of *S. Paul's* giving the *Colossians* this necessary Caution against it here in my

Text. *Theodoret* upon the place informs us that they that maintained it necessary to observe the Law introduced also the Worship of angels affirming that the Law was given by them. And this wickedness was long practised in *Phrygia* and *Pisidia*. Wherefore the Council of *Laodicea* (which is the *Metropolis* of *Phrygia*) made a Canon on purpose to prohibit praying to Angels. And even to this day, saith he, there are to be seen amongst them and their neighbours, Oratories of *S. Michael*. Now saith he they did this upon pretence of Humility, saying, That whereas God Almighty was invisible, incomprehensible, and inaccessible, therefore we ought humbly to sue for his favour through the intercession of Angels. Now I would fain know the difference betwixt that Worship of Angels which the Church of *Rome* calls Catholick (and hath declared to be good and profitable for us) and this which *Theodoret* condemns as Heretical, and was anathematized by the *Laodicean* Council. For my part I can see no difference at all: for as this honest Father hath (no doubt faithfully) stated the case, the *Phrygians* (had they but known them) might as justly have pleaded the Distinctions of *λατρεία* and *δουλεία* for their Excuse as ever the *Romanists* could, only the former were so impudent as to venture their Heresie into the World naked; these later are so crafty, that they have done what they can to palliate and clothe it: but the Mischief is, the Garment they have bestowed upon it is so exceeding thin, and thred-bare, that it doth rather expose than conceal its Deformity. Well then the pretence for Angel-worship was of old, and is to this day, Humility: the Patrons of it tell us that for us miserable Sinners directly  
and



and immediately to address our selves, in our devotions, to the most sacred and infinite Majesty of God is too great a presumption, and that therefore it becomes us rather humbly to implore the help and assistance of the blessed Angels and Saints, ( and especially of the Virgin *Mary*, who as a Mother cannot chuse but be very powerfull with her Son ) and to beg of these holy Persons, that are so gracious in the Court of Heaven, to present our Prayers and Supplications, and to make known our wants unto God; and that by thus doing we perform an acceptable piece of Humility, paying both to God and to the Holy Angels and Saints, that Honour which is due respectively unto them both, ascribing unto God a Superiour, to the Angels and Saints, an inferiour, though to both a religious, Worship. This I take to be the Doctrine of the Church of *Rome* in this point, together with the Reason and Ground of it, which ( as they pretend ) is Humility: whether it be so or no, we are now to enquire. And here I understand not the word Humility in its largest and most comprehensive sense; but only as it signifies our humble Deportment towards God in our Religious Worship of him, which cannot be performed, as it ought, in Truth and sincerity, without humbling our selves before his Divine Majesty, even as low as the Dust out of which we were formed, acknowledging his Supreme and absolute Power and Sovereignty over us, and our necessary Dependence upon him, from whom, and *in whom we live, and move and have our Being*. And so the question in short will be this, Whether the Church of *Rome* or we and the rest of the Reformed Churches, that have justly separated our selves from

from her, as from a Church that is full of Corruptions, and is Schismatical from the whole Body of the Holy Catholick Church of Christ, shew the most sincere and acceptable Humility unto God in our Devotions and Religious Worship; and the case is so plain, that one would a think few words might decide the Controversie among Persons that are not more zealous, and industrious in the Defence of a party, than of the Truth. But now the mischief is, that we Hereticks (as they are pleased to call us) will never submit to the Judgment of any one but God himself for the Decision of any of these Controversies in Religion, and are so partial as to be guided by one plain Text of Scripture though there should be an hundred places in the Fathers that seem to contradict it. This they take very ill from us: but for all that, we shall confidently appeal to the same Tribunal still, at which we are sure no man shall ever be condemned, but for the Injustice of his Cause. Now nothing is more evident in Scripture, than that we cannot demonstrate our Humility to God better, than by a strict and punctual Obedience and an intire Resignation to his Will in all things, as he hath revealed it to us in his Word. This is so certain a Maxime, that I cannot believe any Man is so impudent as directly to call it in question; though, indirectly, I know there are many that do: and therefore I shall presume upon it as granted. And hence will follow these two things. 1. That whosoever directs all his Religious Worship wholly and solely to that Object unto which God in his Word hath commanded him to direct it, exclusively to all other Objects, is, in that respect, infallibly secure of paying unto God

as much Humility as he requires of him. 2. That whosoever presumes to direct any part of his Religious Worship to any Object unto which God hath not commanded him to direct it ; though in so doing he intends ( and that never so sincerely ) to honour God the more by it, yet can have no Assurance that he doth not thereby dishonour him ; and if God hath expressly prohibited that Object so to be Worshipped, I can not see how he can excuse himself from gross Idolatry. I shall illustrate these two propositions by the Example of *Saul*, which one would think should be a sufficient warning to deter any man from interpreting any of God's positive Commands otherwise than according to the direct sence and meaning of the Words, in their most natural and proper signification. When God sent that unhappy King to destroy *Amalek*, he commanded him in these words; *Go, and smite Amaleck and utterly destroy all that they have, and spare them not ; but slay both Man and Woman, Infant and Suckling, Ox and Sheep, Camel and Ass.* The sence of this Command seems to be plain enough, that God would not have one Man, Woman or Child, or Beast saved throughout all the Country, but every one of them to be destroyed. And if *Saul* had done so he might have been secure, that he had obeyed God's Command: Whereas, if he spared but one of the Men, though it were the King himself, and a few of the best of the Sheep and Oxen, though he designed them for a sacrifice to the Lord ; in so doing he could not possibly be sure that he had obeyed it ; at the best he could but hope that he had done it: but ye know that in doing of it he highly offended God, in so much that he deprived him

him of his Kingdom for it. Now to apply this to our present business, God hath in Scripture given us a strict command to direct all our Religious Worship to himself only, and to no other Object whatsoever. It is our Saviours Answer to the Devil, and it may serve for an Answer to all his Agents unto the Worlds End ) *Thou shalt Worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve*, Matt. 4. 10. Now it is demonstrably evident to any man, that is in his right Wits that he that directs all his Prayers and Religious Worship solely and immediately unto God himself, and to no other Object, doth not therein transgress this Commandment ; and it is as demonstrably evident, that whosoever directs his Prayers and Religious Worship to any other Object but God, upon whatsoever pretence ( though it be to honour God the more by it ) cannot be sure that he doth not therein transgress this Commandment. If then we had no other Text in Scripture but this one to be guided by in this case, it is manifest that we who ( understanding these words of our Saviour in the strictest sense ) refuse to give Religious Worship to any one but God himself, cannot thereby incur his Displeasure ; since he cannot condemn us for it, without directly giving himself the lye, and renouncing his own Law : whereas the Church of Rome interpreting this Law without any warrant for it, in a larger sense ( viz. as not restraining all Religious Worship solely unto God ; but only prohibiting the giving of it to wicked Spirits, or to the Heathen Gods or Idols, and the like ) and thereupon presuming to give such Worship, though in an inferiour Degree, to the Holy Angels and Saints, is altogether as inexcusable in so doing, as

*Saul*

*Saul* was in his expedition against the *Amalekites*. But though *Saul's* Fault was great enough as it was; yet it would have been much greater, if God in the Commission which he gave him had expressly named *Agag*, and forbidden him to save even the King himself, and he had spared him notwithstanding: certainly this had been a willful and obstinate Rebellion against the Divine Command. And yet the Church of *Rome* ventures as far as this, and curses all the World that will not joyn with her in it. For God hath not only in general forbidden us to direct our Religious Worship to any other Object but himself only, but he hath moreover in express Terms commanded us particularly not to Worship Angels in these words of my Text. *Let no man beguile you of your Reward in a voluntary Humility, and Worshiping of Angels:* nay and hath also given us two plain instances, by way of example, to satisfy us that the Angels themselves abhor such Worship, and dare no more to accept of it, than Man may dare safely to give it to them. For in the 19th, and 22d, Chapters of the *Revelation*, when *S. John* fell at the Angels feet to Worship him, the Angel immediately forbids him, and reproves him in both places for it in the same words; *See thou do it not: for I am thy fellow-Servant. Worship God.* And yet all this will not satisfy them, that the Worship of Angels is unlawful, and it seems God cannot make a Law so plain (even though he interpret it, and make it a judged case by an example) but the Schoolmen will find out some subtle Distinctions, or other to evade the force of it. And yet all these Distinctions, may be easily baffled (and they will be so at the Day of Judgment) with this one question,  
*Who*



*Who hath required this at your hand.* They are not able to give any tolerable Answer to it now. For in the New Testament they confess that There is neither any direct Command nor Example for the Worship of Angels. In the Old they can find never a Command for it, and all that they insist upon there is the Examples of some holy Men that did worship Angels, without being reprov'd for it, which they think is a plain Argument, that such Worship was not then unlawful, and consequently cannot be so now. But all this may be answered in two words. / For first, it is the opinion of some of the Fathers, and of most of the best Expositours of Scripture, that it was our blessed Saviour himself, that appeared to those holy Men in the Old Testament: and then it is no wonder, that he received Divine Worship from them without giving them a check for it. But secondly, though we should grant ( which we do not ) that before the Coming of Christ the Worship of Angels was Lawful; yet it doth not at all follow that it is so still, since God hath since expressly forbidden it, and declared it to be unlawful both by Precept and Example. And therefore if they will answer ingenuously to this Question, *Who hath required this at your hand?* they must confess that it was not God, but themselves; that it is a Will-worship of their own devising. And if so, I am sure that *Saul* had every whit as fair a Pretence for his voluntary Mercy, in sparing *Agag*, as they have for their voluntary Humility, in worshipping of Angels: and God deliver us from such lame Obedience. Thus much of the Apostles first Argument against the worshipping of Angels. It is a false and voluntary Humility; a Will-worship, as he expressly

expresly calls it, and other such like humane Impositions, in the last Verse of this Chapter.

His next Argument is this; It proceeds from a real and carnal Pride: he that goes about to impose it upon us *intrudes into those things which he hath not seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly Mind.* We have been long enquiring after Humility, and have missed of it after all our search; for it proves a false one: but we need not look so long for the Pride of the Imposers of this Worship, for that will soon discover it self to be a real one. And indeed Pride is very often found, and easily discerned under the false Mask of Humility; and we know who would never stoop so low as to stile himself *Servus Servorum Dei*, if it were not to add a greater lustre to his more beloved Title of *Christi Vicarius*; which how pleasing soever it may seem in Latin, I am sure hath a very unlucky sound in Greek. For the word *Ἀντίχριστος* as properly signifies *Christi Vicarius*, as *Christi Adversarius*: and it is not improbable but that the Holy Ghost made choice of this word on purpose to point at a Person unto whom it might be applicable in either sence; one who under pretence of being Christ's Vicar should indeed be his Enemy. Now the Pride of the imposer of his Worship is so notorious, that I need not go about to expose it, since every own knows that *he exalts himself above all that is called God*, not only in a mystical, but even in a literal, sence. For as if it were a small matter to tread upon the Necks of Kings and Emperours and to kick their Crowns off of their Heads at his pleasure, he ventures once in his life (*viz.* at his Inauguration) to come as near as possible to the trampling upon Christ himself placing

cing his Feet upon the high Altar esteeming his Masters Throne no better than his footstool, and himself *as God sitting in the Temple of God, and shewing himself that he is God.* This I think is a sufficient Demonstration of an unparallelled Pride in one that is *vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind.* I might as easily shew, that he *intrudes into those things which he hath not seen*; whilst by counterfeit Miracles, fabulous Legends, and such like Impostures, he endeavours to perswade us, that he is thoroughly acquainted with all the Transactions of the other World; telling us that the holy Angels and saints do not only pray for us; but that they also can hear our Prayers; nay that any one of them can hear the Prayers of ten thousand several Persons; though they all pray at the same instant for several things, in several Places or Countries of the World. Nay, and he can tell us too unto what Angel, or Saint, it is most proper for us to direct our Prayers in every particular Exigence: of all which matters S. Paul, after he had been caught up into the third Heaven, either was utterly ignorant or most unpardonably negligent, in fourteen several Epistles never to acquaint us with this comfortable Doctrine. Nay, which is worse, he seems directly to contradict it as if he were as obstinate an Heretick as we are, affirming positively, that *there is one God, and one Mediatour between God and Men, the Man Christ Jesus.* 1 Tim. 2. 5. And so I shall pass to the Apostles third Argument against the worship of Angels, which is this.

It is highly injurious to the incommunicable Honour and Prerogative of this one Mediatour between God and Men, our Lord Jesus Christ: they  
that

that are guilty of it hold *not the Head* : that is by offering such a manifest affront to the blessed Son of God they do in effect deny him to be the sole Head of his Church, cutting themselves off from being Members of his Body, and bringing upon themselves a most dreadful Anathema. The Office of a Mediatour between God and Man is an Office of so high and Divine a Nature that no Person could be capable of it, but one who was both God and Man. For it was necessary that whosoever undertook this Office should not only make satisfaction for our Sins, but should also receive our Prayers, and present them unto God, and render them acceptable unto him through his Intercession. Now not to insist upon the former of these two things, it is plain from what I have already said, that the latter of them (*viz.* to receive Prayers. and divine Worship) is an incommunicable Prerogative of God, of which none can upon any Account whatsoever be capable but himself only. God the Father therefore having conferred this high Honour upon his only begotten Son our Lord Jesus Christ, who as he was Man, had purchased it by his Death and Passion, and as he was God equal with the Father was qualified for it, without any injury to the Divine Majesty ; I say, God the Father having conferred upon his Son this Honour, not only of being our Redeemer, but our Advocate also, to receive and present our Prayers, and to make intercession for us, and having not given us the least Intimation in his word that he allows any part of this Honour to any of the holy Angels or Saints, what can be more plain than that they who pray to Angels and Saints as Mediatours, at least, of Intercession toge-



ther with Christ, do thereby highly affront him by joyning Co-partners with him in this incommunicable Honour of being the only Mediatour both of Redemption and Intercession between God and Man. And that our blessed Saviour is so, the Scripture most plainly and frequently declares. *There is but one God, and one Mediatour between God and Men, the Man Christ Jesus.* Saith S. Paul, in the Place above-mentioned, where it is observable, that this Office of Mediatour between God and Men, is an Office so divinely glorious and honourable, that the Apostle thinks it no sacrilege to mention it with the same Reverence and Respect that he doth God himself; *There is one God, and one Mediatour.* And indeed so well he might; Since this Mediatour is God, and *Sits together with his Father in his Throne, being able to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever lives to make intercession for them,* Heb. 7. 25: Let the Church of Rome produce but any one plain Text of Scripture to Satisfie us that there is any other Mediatour ( whether of Redemption or Intercession ) between God and men, besides the Lord Jesus Christ; and we will confess our selves to be ( as they are pleased to call us ) gross Hereticks: but if they can produce no such Text let us repose all our Trust and Confidence in that one Mediatour whom God in his Word hath pronounced to be so, assuring our selves, that whatsoever joyn other Mediatours together with him praying upon that Account either to Angels or Saints, yea even to the blessed Virgin *Mary* herself, by so doing offer a manifest Affront to this one Mediatour between God and Men, cutting themselves off from Christ, and *not holding the Head.*

And



And now I need say very little concerning our Apostles last Argument against the Worship of Angels, which is this, that it is destructive and deadly to our own Souls, and the End of it will be Damnation ; for he that imposes this Worship upon us *beguiles us of our Reward*. I say I need not insist upon this, since it is sufficiently evident from what I have already delivered. For if the Worship of Angels be a false and voluntary Humility, a Will-Worship flatly repugnant to the Word of God ; if it proceed from a real and carnal Pride in the Imposers of it, who *intrude into those things which they have not seen, vainly pufft up by their fleshly mind* ; if it be injurious to the royal and incommunicable Prerogative of our Lord Jesus Christ, which is to be the sole Mediatour between God and Men, insomuch that whosoever owns any other Mediatour besides him (whether it be Saint or Angel) doth thereby in effect renounce his Saviour, *not holding the Head*: then certainly this Worship of Angels must needs be deadly to our Souls, and whosoever imposes it upon us, *beguiles us of our reward*, and brings us into apparent Danger of Damnation. Hence then it is evident, that had we no other Reason ( as we have many and great ones ) this one were abundantly sufficient to justifie our Separation from the Church of Rome ; wherein the Worship of Angels and Saints is not only allowed, but imposed upon all its Members, as a necessary Term of Communion, contrary to the express Word of God, and the Practice of the Primitive Christians, for about three hundred years after Christ. This, I say, is sufficient to prove our Church to be herein Catholic and Apostolical, and theirs Heretical and

Schismatical from the Catholick Church of Christ, cut off from his Body, *and not bolding the Head*; that is not the true Head, which is Christ, though they have a false one that hath usurped that Title, wherein they have literally fulfilled these words of my Text. *Stand fast therefore, Brethren, in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made you free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage.* Ye see that the Worship of Angels and Saints is notoriously Sinful: let no man therefore impose it upon you neither by fraud nor violence, since whosoever doth so beguiles you of your Reward, that *crown of life* which our Lord hath promised to give unto all that are *faithful unto death*.

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## S E R M O N IX.

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MATTH V. 20.

*For I say unto you, That except your Righteousness shall exceed the Righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees ye shall in no case enter into the Kingdom of Heaven.*

**O**F all other Sects among the Jews, the Scribes and Pharisees were the Chief, and by their Learning and the outward shew that they made of Religion, had gained an extraordinary Respect and Veneration from the common People, who looked upon them as infallible Doctors of the Chair, and received all their Tenets and Traditions as Oracles. And as they were highly esteemed of by the People, so they had also a very good opinion of themselves: they loved the uppermost Rooms at feasts, and the chief Seats in the Synagogues, and greetings in the Markets, and to be called of Men Rabbi: they despised all other Persons in comparison of themselves, and as they sat in Moses his Seat, so no doubt but they expected as honourable a place in the Bosom of

*Abraham.* But tho' this fair outside of theirs appeared very lovely, and took much with the People, yet our Saviour saw through it, and discerned that there was nothing but Rottenness and Hypocrisie in their Hearts; that though they made clean the outside of the Cup and of the Platter, yet within they were full of Extortion and Excess; that though they fasted often and made long Prayers, yet it was only for a pretence to devour Widows houses; that though they paid Tithe of Mint and Anise, and Cummin, yet they omitted the weightier Matters of the Law, Judgment, Mercy, and Faith, and that the Gate of Heaven would prove too streight to give any Entrance to their broad Phylacteries, and large Borders of their Garments: and therefore he often charges his Disciples to beware of treading in their steps, not to acquiesce in such a vain and Hypocritical Ostentation of Religion, which however it may gain the Applause of Men, who can see no further than the outside, will be nothing worth when it comes to be examined before his Tribunal, but to labour for Sincerity and Pureness of Heart without which no Man shall see God: *For I say, &c.*

In the handling of which words I shall endeavour, 1. to shew you what the Righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees was, which will not be thought worthy to be admitted into the Kingdom of Heaven. 2. What manner of Righteousness ours must be, that will procure us an entrance thither. 1. For the Righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, if we examine it by the Character which the Holy Evangelists give us of it, we shall find it extremely faulty: and indeed it is impossible to suppose it to be otherwise, when we consider how  
many

many sharp Reproofs and dreadfull Woes, are denounced against it by our Saviour. The chief Particulars which render it faulty and deficient are these. 1. Their Righteousness could not be acceptable in the sight of God, for as much as in general they had a very false Notion of the Obligation of the Law of God, which they interpreted only in the literal Sence of the words, and thought that it extended only to outward actions, but reached not to the inward Thoughts and Intentions of the mind. So long as they washed their Hands they regarded not the foulness of their Heart, and so long as they kept themselves free from any open and external Breach of the Commandments they thought themselves innocent, though their mind was never so much set upon wickedness. So long as they abstained from open Adultery, they thought they might lust after a Woman, and still be chaste. So long as they kept their Hands from shedding any Blood they thought it no sin, or at least a small and venial one, such as God would take no notice of, to hate their Brother in their Heart. So long as they did not bear false witness against their Neighbour before a Judge in open Court they thought it no Crime to backbite and slander him, and that they might securely blast his Reputation and wound his good Name without any prejudice to their own Souls. So long as they abstained from plain Theft, and kept their Hands from picking and stealing, they thought that, like the Priest and the Levite in the Parable, they might innocently pass by their Neighbour whom they saw wounded by Thieves, and that no Obligation lay upon them to relieve him in his Distress. Thus they grossly erred in their Interpretation



tion of the Law, which reaches not only our Actions, but our words and our thoughts, and confines our Tongues and our Hearts as well as our Hands. Such Commandments as these they taught to be the least Commandments, that the Breach of them was a very light and trivial sin, and that for an idle Word or for a lustful or malicious thought or Intention; provided that it broke not out into Action, there was no fear of Damnation. But our Saviour passes a very severe sentence upon them for teaching this Doctrine, in the verse immediately before my Text, *Whosoever saith he, shall break one of these least Commandments, and shall teach Men so, he shall be called the least in the Kingdom of Heaven; that is, he shall not be accounted worthy to enter into that Kingdom.* And then he confutes this false Doctrine of theirs, in the several branches of it in the following part of the Chapter. *Ye have heard, saith he, that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not kill, and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the Judgment: but I say unto you, that whosoever is angry with his Brother without a cause shall be in danger of the Judgment. Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit Adultery; but I say unto you, that whosoever looketh on a Woman to lust after her hath committed Adultery with her already in his Heart. Ye have heard that it hath been said by them of old time, Thou shalt not forswear thy self, but shalt perform unto the Lord thine Oaths: but I say unto you, Swear not at all: but let your Communication be, Yea, yea: Nay, nay: for whosoever is more than these cometh of Evil. Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy Neighbour, and hate thine Enemy: but I say unto*  
you,

*You Love your Enemies ; bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you.* This then was the first thing wherein the Righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees was deficient : They misunderstood the sense and meaning of the Law which our Saviour in this Sermon of his Restores to it self, and interprets in its full and proper Latitute. And secondly, as it must needs be that *Uno absurdo dato mille sequuntur*, upon this first false principle they built a second, and having confined the Sense of the Law to so narrow a Compass, they thereupon concluded that they were able to keep and perform it to a Title without any Supernatural Grace and Assistance from Heaven. And indeed if this Construction of the Law had been true, it is possible that this Conclusion which they drew from it might have been so too; for if the Law had required no more of us than the bare abstaining from those outward Acts of Adultery and Murder, and Theft, and Perjury, and the like, which in expresse Terms it forbids, perhaps then we might have fulfilled it by our own strength. But when a wanton Glance is Adultery, when a revengefull Thought is Murder, when Usury ( or Extortion at least ) is Theft, when not giving to the Poor is stealing from the Lord, when a tatling Tongue bears false witness, and every idle word is to be accounted for at the Day of Judgment, who then can pretend to innocence ? *who then can say, that he hath made his Heart clean, and that he is pure from his Sin ?* No, the best of Men must then be forced to acknowledge himself to be a debtor to the Law, that he falls more than seven times in a day, and that there is not a just Man upon Earth  
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that doth good and sins not. And yet that the Pharisees had this fond opinion of themselves, is plain from the Parable of that proud Pharisee that justified himself in his Prayer to God Almighty, *Luke 18. 11. God, I thank thee, saith he, that I am not as other Men are, Extortioners, unjust, Adulterers, or even as this Publican. I fast twice in the week, I give Tythes of all that I possess; and* from the confident Answer of the young Man, *Matth. 19. 20. who when our Saviour shewed him that the way to enter into Life was to keep the Commandments and what those Commandments were, presently replies, All these things have I kept from my youth: but all this while though he thought that he had exactly kept the Commandments of the second Table he understood not the meaning of those of the first; he knew not that Covetousness was Idolatry; for when our Saviour to compleat his Righteousness and make him perfect, exhorts him to sell all that he hath, and give to the poor, and to come and follow him, though he promised him the Recompence of Treasure in Heaven, yet he went away sorrowful; for he had great Possessions upon Earth, and was loath to part with them. But, thirdly, they stay'd not here, but they proceeded a step further, and having entertained that false Opinion, That they were able to perform a perfect Obedience to the Law, they thereupon perswaded themselves, that that Obedience of theirs was meritorious in the Sight of God, and they boldly justified themselves upon the account of their own Works: and arrogantly boasted of them even to God himself, as ye may see by the instance I but now mentioned of the Pharisee that trusted in his own Righteousness,*

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and despised the Publican. Fourthly, this good Opinion they had of themselves, puffed them up with so much pride, and vain Glory that they scorned and despised all Men that were not of their own Sect. They were so well satisfied, and pleased with their own virtues that they took no care to examine their own hearts, but they made it their business to invade the Prerogative of God, to search the hearts of other Men, and one of the most remarkable Instances of their Piety was their forwardness to censure and condemn the Lives and Conversations, of their Neighbours. Let a Man behave himself never so innocently, and blamelessly, both towards God, and towards Man, yet if he was not one of them, he must pass for a Sinner. The Temperance of *John* the Baptist, if it be tried at their bar, would be judged to proceed from his being possessed with a Devil, and the free and chearful Conversation of our Saviour to be Gluttony, and Wine-bibbing, Friendship and Fellowship with Publicans, and Sinners. Fifthly, they did all their good Works for an ill End and Purpose, out of a vain-glorious Desire to gain the Applause of Men: for this end they made long Prayers in the Synagogues and in the Corners of the Streets, in the most publick places they could find, that they might be seen of Men, and perhaps none at all in their Closet. For this end they made broad their Phylacteries and enlarged the Borders of their Garments, disfigured their faces when they fasted, and sounded a Trumpet before they did their Alms; they put on demure and sanctified Looks, that the People might have their piety in admiration, when all the while it was nothing but gross hypocrisie, and they made Religion only a stalking horse to their worldly



worldly interest. Sixthly and lastly, they preferred their own Traditions before the written Word of God, upon which account they are sharply reprov-  
ed by our Saviour, *Matt. 15. Why, saith he, do you transgress the commandment of God by your tradition? For God commanded saying, Honour thy Father and Mother, and he that curseth Father or Mother let him die the death. But ye say, Whosoever shall say to his Father or his Mother, it is a gift by whatsoever thou mightest be profited by me, and honour not his Father or his Mother, he shall be free. Thus have ye made the commandment of God of none effect by your tradition.* Among these traditions of theirs were those of washing of Cups and of Pots and of Brazen Vessels and of tables, but above all that which they observed with the greatest preciseness and strictness imaginable was their washing of their Hands before they eat, which as the learned Dr. *Hammond* tells us upon that occasion they held to be so necessary and indispensable a duty that one of their *Rabbies* saith, That he that takes meat with unwashed Hands is worthy of Death, and that the same person being in Prison and having some water given him for his use to wash and to drink, having accidentally spilt one half of it he washed his Hands in the Remainder, thinking it more necessary to do so than to drink, and to die, than to violate the tradition of his Ancestours. This is, in brief, the Summ and Substance of the Righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, as we find it described to us in the holy Scriptures, and if we mark it narrowly and consider on the one hand the great veneration they had for unwritten Traditions, their false and corrupt interpretation of the holy Scriptures and their great confidence and  
trust



trust in the merits of their own works, and on the other hand their rash and intolerable censoriousness, and the ungoverned liberty which they gave to their tongues, their vain-glorious Ostentation of Religion, their excessive Pride, and their ambitious desire of being accounted Saints, the Children of *Abraham* and the precious People of the Lord, it seems to be a compleat mixture of Popery and Phanaticism, and however they pretend now to be ashamed one of the other, and are at so much odds and variance that a large Kingdom is too little to contain them both, yet there was a time when they shook hands together, & were both peaceably united in one mans breast. Having thus taken a view of the false and Hypocritical Righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees which shall in no case obtain an entrance into the Kingdom of Heaven, let us in the next place consider what manner of Righteousness ours must be which will bring us to those Mansions of Glory. And, 1. it must not have any of these Faults with which the Righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees was tainted, and rendered odious, and abominable in the sight of God. Their Righteousness (as ye have heard) was such as consisted only in the performance of external Actions according to the literal Sense of the Law, but ours must proceed further, even to the cleansing and purifying our Hearts from all manner of evil thoughts. *Blessed are the pure in Heart, saith our Saviour, for they shall see God.* They, and they only shall enjoy that beatifical Vision whose Heart is undefiled, for it is that which God chiefly respects; and so long as that is right and sincere as to the Main, though we do sometimes through the Frailty of our Nature  
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and the strength of some Temptation that hath overcome us, fall into any sin, yet we shall certainly obtain Pardon at the Hand of God upon our true Repentance. They thought themselves well enough if they did no evil; nay, more than so, if evil was done them by another Person, they thought they might with a safe Conscience revenge themselves, but our Master hath commanded us not to resist Evil, but if any man smite us upon the Right cheek to turn to him the other also; and not only not to hurt our Neighbour, but to love our Enemies, to bless them that curse us, to do good to them that hate us, and to pray for them which despitefully use us, and persecute us. It is not sufficient for us that our outward Actions are not Evil, but we must take heed to our Words and our Thoughts, we must make a Covenant with our Eyes, keep our Mouth with a bridle that we offend not in our Tongue, and bring into Captivity every Thought to the Obedience of Christ; for, for every idle Word and every misguided Thought we shall give an account at the Day of Judgment. 2. Our Righteousness must not be such as makes us presume, that we can of our selves, and by our own strength keep all the Commandments, and fulfill the whole Law. Alas, we are not able of our selves to keep any one Commandment; and *S. James* tells us, that *if we offend in one point we are guilty of all*. The Scripture hath most plainly and fully discovered to us, our weakness in this case; that we are so far from being able to perform any good Work, that we cannot of our selves so much as think a good Thought without the Holy Spirit of God inspires it into our Hearts, who work in us both to will and to do of his good pleasure, that  
there

there is not a just man upon Earth that doth good, and sins not, but that in many things we offend all, and that if we say that we have no Sin, we deceive our selves, and the Truth is not in us. These, and the like expressions in Scripture, if we consider them, are sufficient to satisfy us that we are so far from being able to keep the whole Law, that we cannot perform any one Title of it as we ought: and therefore we must not as the Scribes and Pharisees, did place our Righteousness in this, that we are able, and do perform an intire Obedience to the Law. And if so, much less must we in the third place, as they did, and the Church of Rome, who follows their Example, doth at this day, boast of and Glory in our own works, as if they were meritorious in the sight of God. The Scripture every where condemns this as the most dangerous and damnable Pride with which our Hearts can possibly be infected, and nothing will more certainly bar the Gate of Heaven against us, than our supposing that we can deserve that it should flie open unto us. *How can a Man be just with God?* saith Job, and *In thy sight*, saith the Psalmist, *no man living shall be justified.* And if no Man living can pretend to be just in the sight of God so as to escape his Condemnation, surely, much less can any Man pretend to have done him so great service as to merit a Reward from him. No, all boasting and glorying on our part is utterly excluded, except it be glorying in our infirmities that the power of Christ may rest upon us. We are taught a quite contrary Lesson, a Lesson of Meekness and Humility; when we have done our best, to say that we are unprofitable Servants, and to desire that the iniquity even of our most Holy things,  
and

and the shamefull Nakedness of our Righteousness may be covered and hid from the pure Eyes of God, *by the white and spotless Robe of the Righteousness of Christ.* Fourthly, we must not as the Pharisees did, (and as too many that tread in their steps do at this day) place our Righteousness in our forwardness to censure the Lives and Conversations of other Persons, and in our backwardness to enquire into our own. Censoriousness in some men's Opinion passes for a Gospel-virtue, and he that is most forward to speak evil of others, and especially of his betters, of his Superiours, and Governours, is for so doing lookt upon to be the greatest Saint. But surely, these are Saints of a new stamp; and I know no reason why they arrogate that Title to themselves, except it be by an Antiphrasis; because they walk directly contrary to the Doctrine of the Gospel, which hath expressly commanded us not to judge, lest we be judged ourselves, and to speak evil of no Man, especially not to despise Dominion and speak evil of Dignities, except we have an ambition to be of the number of those mockers which *S Jude* prophesied should come in the last time, who should walk after their own ungodly Lusts, Separating themselves, sensual, having not the Spirit: all incomparable qualifications for Saintship! Fifthly, we must not, as the Pharisees did put on a shew of Religion purposely to gain the Applause of Men, and to carry on our worldly Designs. I am sure this unhappy Nation hath swarmed with Pharisees enough of this sort; Men that with a specious shew of Piety led captive silly Women, beguiled unstable Souls, and gained Admiration of the credulous and easy Vulgar, that with sanctified Pretentions, Holy Looks,



Looks, frequent Fastings, long Prayers, and canting and treasonable Sermons, carried on the most villainous and accursed Designs, that ever publickly disgraced Christianity. And God grant that there be not too many such Pharisees among us still: but I pass them by: *their Names are odious, and their Religion scandalous.* Lastly we must not as the Pharisees did, and we know who doth Still, prefer unwritten Traditions before the holy Scriptures. God hath caused that sacred Book to be written on purpose for our Instruction, and hath therein fully revealed so much of his Will to us, as is sufficient for us to know in order to our obtaining everlasting Life: and we must not add to it, nor diminish from it, but acquiesce in it, and make it the sole Rule and Measure of our Faith, imposing nothing upon our own or other men's Consciences, but what is manifestly consensaneous and agreeable to the Doctrine contained therein. Thus ye see that our Righteousness must be thoroughly purged and cleansed from all those Defects with which the Righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees was defiled. But still all this is not sufficient: if our Righteousness doth not exceed theirs infinitely more than thus, it will be nothing worth; we shall in no case enter into the Kingdom of Heaven. That Righteousness which must bring us thither must be absolutely compleat and perfect, without Spot or Blemish such as the All seeing Eye of God can discern no Defect in; and that it is impossible for us ever to find such a Righteousness as this in our selves I have already shewed you: and yet such a Righteousness we must all of us have, or else never expect Salvation; for *without Holiness*, ay, and perfect Holiness too,



*no man shall see the Lord.* Since therefore we our selves are not able to perform such a Righteousness as this, and yet such an one is absolutely necessary to bring us unto Heaven, we must seek it from some other person: and to whom should we have recourse for it, but to Christ our Saviour, *who of God is made unto us Wisdom and Righteousness, and Sanctification, and Redemption.* Let us therefore if we desire to be saved, not trust in our own Merits, as the Pharisees did: *for by the Works of the Law shall no flesh be justified;* but with the Hand of a true and lively Faith let us put on the Robe of Christs Righteousness which will be sure to hide our faults, and to present us holy, blameless, and undefiled in the Presence of God. But let us not deceive our selves neither, and pretend to have this Faith, and consequently that we have an interest in the Righteousness of Christ, when there is no such Matter; but let us try and examine our Faith whether it be a true and lively Faith or no. If it be not a Faith that Works by love; if it be not fruitful and productive of good Works, it is dead and insignificant, it will stand us in no stead at all; but if we pretend so to lay hold on Christ, we shall only grasp a shadow. No, though we must not rely upon our own performances, yet we must work, ay, and work as heartily as if our Works were Meritorious too; but when we have done all we must utterly disclaim our own Righteousness, trusting only in the Merits of Christ, and desiring with *S. Paul* that *we may be found in him, not having our own Righteousness, which is of the Law, but that which is through the Faith of Christ the Righteousness which is of God by Faith.* This is such a Righteousness as will never fail us; but whereas the  
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the Righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees and of all other Hypocrites and Dissemblers with God shall sink them into the bottomless Pit, this Righteousness of Faith will refresh our Souls, and cheer our Hearts with the sweet Hopes and comfortable Expectation here, and bless them hereafter eternally with the joyfull Fruition of that Glory which God hath prepared for all them that love him.

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## S E R M O N X.

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1 P E T. IV. 18.

*And if the Righteous scarcely be saved,  
where shall the Ungodly and the Sin-  
ner appear?*

**T**HAT there shall be another Life after this, in which all Mankind shall reap the Fruit of their Actions done in the Flesh, and be adjudged to an unalterable State, either of Happiness or Misery to all Eternity, is not only an Article of Faith amongst Christians, but a Truth of which the wiser sort of the Heathens were generally convinced. This, I say, is a Truth which all Christians profess firmly to believe; but yet alas how small is the Number of those that demonstrate the Truth and Sincerity of their Faith, by their Holy Lives and Conversations? We all of us know, and are assured, that there is a just God *who will render to every man according to his deeds*, Rom. 2. 6. *and will by no means clear the guilty*, Exod. 34. 7. We believe that there is an Heaven prepared for Saints, and an Hell for Sinners; and yet notwithstanding this belief, how many thousands that are called by the Name of Christ run on head-long, boldly and impudently

prudently in Wickedness, and pursue with all imaginable Eagerness and Delight, those fatal Paths that lead to Destruction; as if the Joys of Heaven were a Trifle not worth our Acceptance, or the Torments of Hell the object rather of our Desires than Fears. But notwithstanding all this Obstinacy and Hardness of our Hearts the Lord God, who is ever *merciful* and gracious, *long-suffering*, and *abundant in goodness and truth*, leaves us not to our selves, but is continually calling and inviting us to Repentance by the preaching of his Word, and by the secret and powerful Operations of his Holy Spirit. Sometimes Heaven is pleased to smile upon us, and as it were kindly to desire and intreat us to come and be its Inhabitants, to accept of *the glorious Liberty of the Children of God*, to be made Citizens of *Sion*, and free Denizens of the New *Jerusalem*: and at other times it frowns and awakens us with Thunder out of our sinful Lethargy. God tries all ways imaginable to reclaim us, and deliver us from the Jaws of Death. Sometimes he pours down his Judgments upon our Heads, that in our Affliction we may seek him early; and sometimes he stretches forth the Arms of his Mercy to embrace us, and *draws us to him with the Cords of a Man, with the Bands of Love*, Hos. 11. 4. Sometimes he holds forth the golden Scepter to us, and graciously invites us to come and *kiss the Son lest he be angry*, and sometimes he shakes his Rod of Iron over our Backs, and threatens to dash us in pieces if we will *not bear the Rod and who hath appointed it*. Hence are those many and gracious Invitations to Repentance which God hath made to us in his Word, and those terrible Threatnings which he hath

therein denounced to affright us from Sin : amongst all which there is scarce one to be found, that is more emphatical and piercing than this of my Text, which must needs fill the Hearts of all obstinate and impenitent Sinners with Horrour ; yea, and it strikes a Terrour even into the Godly themselves, and makes them *work out their Salvation with fear and trembling* : It thunders Hell, certain and inevitable Damnation to the Wicked, and hardly admits the Righteous into Heaven : *And if the Righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the Ungodly and the Sinner appear ?*

The words are propounded by way of interrogation ; a thing very frequent in Scripture, and generally used for the more powerful enforcing of some weighty and material Argument. *What could have been done more to my Vineyard, that I have not done in it ?* saith God, *Isa. 5. 4.* that is, as much as if he had said, I have spared for no care, nor pains, nor cost, and could not possibly do any more in it than I did. So here in my Text, *where shall the Ungodly and the Sinner appear*, intimates to us, that they shall not be able to appear at all, but, shall be cast for ever out of God's Presence ; when in the great and terrible Day of the Lord, *they shall look upon him whom they have pierced*, they shall be confounded with Horrour, and shall wonder and perish. The words offer to our Consideration these four things, two different sorts of Persons, the Righteous, and the Wicked ; and the two different Ends of these Persons, and their unalterable Estates in the next World, Salvation of the one, and Damnation of the other : So that we may resolve the Text into these two Propositions. 1. The Righteous shall be scarcely saved.

2. The



2. The Wicked shall most certainly be damned.

First, *The Righteous shall scarcely be saved.* In speaking to which Proposition, I shall first shew you who are here meant by the Righteous: And secondly, I shall shew you why they are here said to be scarcely saved. First, I shall shew you who are here meant by the Righteous; and 'tis a far easier matter to describe, than either to find out their Persons, or to imitate their Example. For though Christian Charity obliges to judge no Man rashly, but to hope the best of all Men; yet in such a Deluge of Profaneness and Impiety, as hath now overflowed the whole World, we may *look for Judgment, but behold Oppression; for Righteousness, but behold a Cry*, Isa. 5. 7. We may easily mistake the Shadow for the Substance, and a Pharisaical Ostentation of Righteousness may impose upon the Charity of some Men, so far as to make them reverence a Hypocrite, and be ready to canonize a Person, whose Name God hath blotted out of the Book of Life. For if the All-seeing Eye of God, could discover but one just Person in so great a City as *Sodom*; nay, but one righteous Man (*Noah*) upon the Face of the whole Earth; surely we can expect to find but few righteous now, when we have great Reason to apprehend that the End of all things is at hand, and Sin abounds to such a Degree, that it seems to have made the World as ripe now for the last Deluge of Fire, as it was of old for that of Water. And yet in the Midst of this perverse and crooked Generation, amongst whom the Divine Providence hath appointed us to sojourn, it is hard to meet with any Man that doth not desire to be accounted

righteous, except some notorious and profligate Wretches that bid open Defiance to God and Goodness, and pride themselves in being the Enemies of Heaven. For Virtue is so lovely and beautiful, that she commands Respect and Reverence even from her professed Enemies, and extorts Applause out of the Mouth of Vice her self. All Men commend her, but few embrace her: Many there are that *render* to her *the calves of their lips*, but few their heart. The Drunkard will preach Temperance over his full Cups. The Extortioner will magnifie Justice and Honesty, and yet still grind the Faces of the Poor. The ambitious Man will extol Humility; but he loves it in others, not in himself; and is never better pleased, than when he sees his Brethren at his Footstool, that he himself may be exalted. The covetous Man will pretend as much as any one to Charity; but when any of Christ's afflicted Members naked, or hungry, or thirsty, or sick, or imprisoned implores his help; he may perhaps, as St. James speaks, bid them *depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled*, and that is all the Charity that he will afford them. The common Swearer will exclaim sometimes against Profaneness, and be ready to ask God pardon almost after every Oath, and swear again with the next Breath. The wanton, if he light into severe and grave Company, will sometimes pretend to abhor his darling Sin, and preach a Lecture of Chastity, when perhaps he hath made an assignation the very next Hour to meet his Minion. Thus is Holiness and Piety so excellent in its own Nature, so desirable a Perfection, that almost all Men praise it, but few practise it. Every Man, though  
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he loves the Wages of Unrighteousness, is ready to wish with *Balaam*, that he may die the Death of the Righteous, but how few are there that are careful to live his life. Certainly such Persons as these are not the Righteous that are here meant in my Text, who shall be accounted worthy *through much Tribulation, to enter into the Kingdom of God*; but they are notorious Hypocrites, whose *hope shall perish*.

But to proceed further, there are another sort of Men in the World, whose Righteousness, though it exceeds that of the Scribes and Pharisees, yet if it be weighed in the balance of the Sanctuary, it will be found too light. And though it may commend their Memory to Posterity and raise a lasting Name for them here upon Earth, yet it will never be able to write one for them in the Book of Life. I mean Men who in general are of honest and upright Conversation, who endeavour to frame and order their lives so according to God's word, that no Man can find any just reason to question their Title to Salvation: but nevertheless they have some beloved sin or other known perhaps to none but God and themselves, which will hinder their flight towards Heaven: and though the Pleasure they take in it, makes them willing to think it but a little one, it will at the last prove so big as to hinder their entrance at the strait Gate. But come what will on't, they can by no means be perswaded to part with it; but they hope God will bear with them in this one thing; as *Naaman* said to the Prophet *Elisha*, 2 Kings 5. 18. *When I bow down my self in the House of Rimmon, the Lord pardon thy Servant in this thing*. They can willingly conform to God's Pleasure in other things,  
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and contentedly endeavour to keep all his Commandments but this one; tho', as S. *James* assures us, by offending but in one point they are guilty of all: by indulging themselves in the wilful breach of any one of God's Commandments, they transgress the whole Law, and utterly exclude themselves from all hopes of Salvation. Such an one was the rich young Man, Matth. 19. that came to enquire of our Saviour *what good thing he must do to have eternal Life*. No doubt he was to all outward appearance of an unblameable Conversation, and of good Repute in the place where he lived; and Jesus himself began to love him, when he heard him give so good an account of himself, and found him desirous to be still further instructed in his duty. But little did the young Man expect so severe a Command as to *sell all his Possessions, and to take up the Cross and follow Christ*. This was sore against the hair. It was an hard thing, he thought to sell his Possessions to take up a Cross; an hard thing to part with his Wealth to purchase Affliction, and to exchange a Garland of Roses for a Crown of Thorns. If Salvation must cost so much, he was resolved to let it alone, and thought it not worth his while to part with his present Enjoyments for the Reversion of Heaven: but though he had made so great a shew of Religion, and had kept (as he pretended) all the Commandments from his Youth, yet Christ's Yoke was too heavy for him; and *he went away sorrowing, for he had great Possessions*. This is, no doubt, the case of many now in the world that pass in the Eyes of Men for good Christians. They make a very fair shew of Religion, insomuch that they cheat even their own selves, and perswade themselves in-

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to a groundless presumption of their own Salvation, and that the condition of their Souls is very good when it must of necessity be otherwise, so long as they harbour a Serpent in their bosom which will be sure to sting them to death, some beloved sin or other of which they cannot find in their Hearts to repent. Perhaps they come to Church constantly, and for the most part receive the word with gladness. But nevertheless, *their goodness is but as a morning cloud, and as the early dew it goeth away.* Though sometimes at the hearing of a searching Sermon, their affections may be extraordinarily moved for the present; yet the good seed of the word can take no firm Root in such stony Ground. It is but only a sudden Motion that they feel in their Hearts, which passes away as quick as it came. It is but a faint representation, an empty shadow of that unspeakable comfort and joy in the Holy Ghost which is a continual Feast to the Godly, a Heaven upon Earth to all those happy Souls, *who are sealed unto the day of Redemption.* These Men, like Agrippa, are but almost perswaded to be Christians. Some good thing there is in them toward the Lord; but it is so very little, that their faith is less than a grain of Mustard-seed. They would fain enter into Heaven at the last; but neither the hopes of Heaven nor fear of Hell can prevail with them, to *lay aside that darling Sin which doth so easily beset them.* They can be content to let God have a good share of their Heart; but they cannot be perswaded to give him the whole. They can endure to hear God's Word preached, and perhaps, for the most part they delight in it too. They love to hear Sin condemned, and Godliness commend-



mended, so long as they imagine themselves to be unconcerned. But if the Preacher chance to touch one of these Men to the quick, and saith to him in plain Terms, *Thou art the Man*; then he is more ready to fly in his Face like *Ahab*, and to tell him, that he is a *Troubler of Israel*, than to confess with *David*, that *he hath sinned against the Lord*. Or at the best he goes away sorrowing like the Rich-man, or trembling like *Felix*, and desires to hear no more of those matters till the Archangel's Trump shall summon him to hear of them, to his Everlasting Confusion. Whilst the Prophet speaks to these Men smooth things, so long they can hear him with pleasure, and he is to them, as *Ezekiel* was to the Jews, as a *very lovely Song of one that hath a pleasant Voice, and can play well on an Instrument*. But if he sharply rebukes Sin, and they find their own Consciences touched to the quick, then they are pricked to the Heart, not with godly Sorrow and Contrition, but with Fury and Indignation. While he speaks to them in the still small Voice of the Gospel, and preaches the glad Tidings of Peace and Reconciliation with God by Jesus Christ, they are pleased at the Heart, and are too ready to lay hold on those Promises which belong only to the *Israel* of God. But if he thunder out against them the Curses of the Law, and denounces the Wrath of God against all impenitent Sinners; then they sit but at little ease in their Seats, and the Church begins to be too hot for them. They like it well, so long as the Spiritual Chirurgeon pours Balm into their Wounds; but if he takes his Probe and begins to search them, they are not able to endure it. The Prophet *Micaiah* had  
never

never been condemned to be *fed with Bread of Affliction, and Water of Affliction*, had he been one of the lying Prophets, and prophesied good concerning *Ahab*. *S. John* Baptist's Head might have remained secure on his Shoulders, and never have been served up in a Charger, to satisfy the longing of a revengeful Woman, had he but permitted *Herod* quietly to enjoy his beloved *Herodias*. Our blessed Saviour had never been Crucified, had he not so frequently and publickly reproved the Hypocrisie of the Scribes and Pharisees. Thus ye see the Righteousness of these partial Professors of Piety, and how dangerous a thing it is for Men to take the liberty to cherish any one Sin. For though at the present it may seem to be but a little one, it will one Day shew it self more at large, appear in its proper Colours, and like the *little Cloud that arose out of the Sea like a Man's hand*, it will suddenly overspread their whole Heaven, and darken their Consciences with Horrour and Astonishment. They may pass for good Christians in fair Weather; but what will they do in foul? They may venture abroad, and shew their Heads boldly while the Sun shines; but can they out-face a Storm? They appear like Saints in the Halcyon Days of the Church, when she enjoys Peace and Tranquillity, and flourishes under the Protection of pious and prudent Governours; but surely they will tremble at the fiery Trial, and make Shipwreck concerning Faith in the Tempest of Persecution? They may bless God when they are in Prosperity, while he *makes an Hedge about them and their House*; but can they do it as heartily (like *Job*) when they are in Affliction? A *Judas* may own Christ,

Christ, and cry *Hosanna*, to the Son of *David*, when he rides in Triumph towards *Jerusalem*; and a *Peter* may deny him when he is at *Calvary*. 'Tis Persecution that is the surest Touch-stone to try a Christian: 'Tis that which will discover the true Metal from the counterfeit. For certainly, he that will readily lay down his Life for Christ's sake, will much more be willing to part with all his Sins for him, and will not dare to harbour the least Lust which may provoke his Displeasure. But suppose there arises no such thing as Persecution to disturb them, but all be calm and quiet, such Persons as these must needs be very unhappy notwithstanding. For surely, they will find but very little Satisfaction in any of their Actions, no not in their very Prayers themselves; *For we know that God bears not Sinners*; and he is a Sinner (though not so great a one) that willingly allows himself in the Commission of any one known Sin, as well as he that *sells himself to do evil in the sight of the Lord*, and commits all Iniquity with greediness. *Israel* must fall before their Enemies, so long as there is an accursed thing amongst them; and so long as we allow our selves in the Commission of any one Sin, our very Prayers themselves will be turned into Sin. And now, if *it will profit a Man nothing though he gain the whole World, and lose his own Soul*, what a Madness then are they guilty of, who being otherwise well affected to all the Duties of Religion, forfeit Heaven for the Satisfaction of but one predominant Lust? This is like *Esau* to sell their Birth-right for a Mess of Pottage; like our first Parents, to lose the whole Garden by the eating of but one forbidden Tree. Methinks, when they have proceeded

ceeded thus far, when they are advanced so near to the Gate of Heaven, they might take one step more, and enter in. When they have mortified all their Lusts but one, what a shamefull thing is it to yield to that at the last; and how dismal will their Fall be, who shall be cast down to Hell from so fair a Prospect of Salvation?

But to leave these there are another sort of Men, who though they have attained to an higher degree of Righteousness than this, yet are not the Righteous which are here meant in my Text. For there are Some Men of so unprejudiced and unbiassed Understanding, so quick sighted, that they can discover such a splendour and beauty in Virtue, and such an abominable Filthiness and Deformity in Vice, that the former is sweeter to them than their Life, and death it self less dreadful than the latter. Neither Art, nor Force, neither Flatteries, nor Threats can divorce them from that sweet content and joy, which is the natural effect and consequence of a Virtuous Life, or perswade them to ingulf themselves in that deplorable Misery which torments those Souls that are enslaved to Vice, but they constantly do their utmost endeavour, as the Apostle exhorts, to *abstain from all appearance of evil*. They see that the laughter of those *fools*, who combine together to *make a mock at Sin*, proceeds only from the teeth outward, and is but *like the crackling of thorns under a pot*. They see all that Madness that reigns and rages in the World, and they find that there is no true Comfort and Satisfaction to be had in any thing, but Virtue alone; and therefore to that they stedfastly cleave, with a resolution to part with their lives and fortunes, and whatsoever else is dearest



dearest to them, rather than to violate any of its Laws. But notwithstanding all this, though I must needs confess that such persons as these are burning and shining Lights in the World, yet if they have not one qualification more to make them perfect, they are not the Righteous here meant in my Text. For such persons, as Historians tell us, were *Socrates*, and *Cato*, and many more of the ancient Heathens who never heard of the blessed Jesus, *the only Name under Heaven given among Men whereby we must be saved.*

Thus far I have given you only a negative description of the Righteous Man, and shewed you what Manner of Persons, that make a fair shew in the World, have nevertheless no just right to that Title. And now to declare to you positively who he is, and to shew you the difference of the Righteous Man here meant in my Text, from the three former sorts of Men which I have been describing, I must tell you, that he hath nothing at all in him of the first sort ( for it is impossible that ye should imagin him to be a notorious Hypocrite ) and he hath all in him that is good in either of the two latter, and to all this he adds the last, and best qualification, which is Faith in Christ. It is Faith alone by which he lives; it is Faith alone which renders him truly Righteous, and justifies him in the sight of God. And here I mean not a false and dead Faith, which indeed is no Faith at all; but a true and lively one that brings forth Fruits meet for Repentance, such a Faith as will be sure to shew it self in him by the Holiness of his Life and conversation, and *his works praise him in the gates.* All those excellent Virtues which have commended the Names of *Cato* and *Socrates*, and other renowned



ed Heathens to posterity, are in him; but in a more eminent Manner Sublimated and refined by Grace, and made acceptable to God by Faith, *without which it is impossible to please him.* Cato might love his friends; but he loves his Enemies. Cato might do good to them that did good to him, but he *doth good to them that hate him, blesses them that curse him, and Prays for them which despitefully use him and persecute him.* Cato's heroick Spirit might (one would have thought) patiently have endured Tribulation; but his unhappy End plainly shews that he fainted under it: but *Job* doth not only patiently bear all that heavy chain of afflictions with which he was tried, but he blesses God in the midst of them all as heartily as ever he did in the height of his prosperity: as well in his Sickness as in his health; as well when God takes away from him all that he had as when he caused *his candle to shine upon his head*, and made him *the greatest of all the Men of the East.* Cato might prefer Death before Vice, and chuse rather to endure the most exquisite torments, than to commit a wicked action; but the Righteous Man doth not only willingly lay down his Life for the truth whensoever he is called to it, but he *rejoyces that he is counted worthy to suffer shame for the Name of Jesus.* In a word that love of Virtue which was in Cato and Socrates, and the rest of those excellent Worthies which we read of amongst the Heathen, though it hath procured them a Name which is far *better than precious ointment*, and will shine in History as long as the World shall last, to the shame of all Christians that come short of their perfections, yet it is probable that it proceeded chiefly from self-interest; either from some hopes and expectation they

had of a reward in another Life, or else from that Peace and Tranquility of mind which they found that it procured them in this : but the Righteous Man aims chiefly at the Honour of God. All his actions, as near as he can, he designs primarily and principally to advance the Glory of his Creator and his own Salvation possesses but the second place in his thoughts. As *S. Paul* exhorts, *Whether he eats or drinks, or whatsoever he doth in word or deed, he doth all in the Name of the Lord Jesus, and to the Glory of God.* And after he hath passed the time of his Sojourning here in fear ; when he hath fought the good fight, finished his course, kept the Faith, overcome all his Spiritual Enemies, resisted the temptations of Satan, subdued and mortified his own Lusts and Corruptions, despised the Derision of those Fools that sit in the seat of the scornful ; trampled upon all the vain pomps and flattering Glories of this present World, and after all this perhaps at the last is called to suffer an ignominious and painful Death for the testimony of a good conscience and to endure the cruellest torments that the wit and malice of wicked Men can inflict upon him ; then he takes up his Cross with joy, goes like a Lamb to the Slaughter, acknowledging that he hath done nothing, that he is but *an unprofitable Servant*, that he is less than the least of all God's Mercies, and that his Life is a Sacrifice unworthy of his acceptance ; and therefore he desires to appear before God's Tribunal *not having his own Righteousness which is of the Law, but that which is through the Faith of Christ, the Righteousness which is of God by Faith.* This is such a Righteous Man as is here meant in my Text, This is that *Blessed Man unto whom the Lord im-*  
*putes*

*putes not iniquity, and in whose Spirit there is no guile. And this is that Man who ( as it is plain from my Text ) shall Scarcely be saved. How that comes to pass I shall hereafter endeavour to shew you. For though he shall be Scarcely saved, yet saved he shall be infallibly; for to him that is faithful unto Death Christ will give a Crown of Life.*

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## SERMON XI.

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1 P E T. IV. 18.

*And if the Righteous scarcely be saved,  
where shall the Ungodly and the Sin-  
ner appear ?*

**I**N the handling of these words I have already shewed you, who the Righteous Man is, and how he is distinguished from the rest of the World. He is a Man of a Temper and Conversation exceedingly different from the generality of Mankind, and lives amongst them like a Stranger, and a Sojourner in a foreign Countrey, where he hath few or no Acquaintance ; like a single Stalk of good Corn in a large Field of Tares. Few Men mind him, few regard him, few keep him company, few delight in his Conversation, and fewer imitate it : He is a Proverb, and a By-word among the Ungodly, *who account his Life madness, and his End to be without Honour. For Christ's sake he bears Reproach : They that sit in the Gate speak against him ; and he is the Song of the Drunkards.* The World and he are irreconcilable Enemies, as contrary one to the other, as Light and Dark-

Darkness, as Heaven and Hell, as Christ and Belial, while the Wicked and Ungodly rejoice, he mourns; while they laugh, he weeps; while they triumph in the very *Gall of Bitterness, and Bonds of Iniquity*, he is a *Prisoner of Jesus Christ*; while they are in great Power, and spread themselves like a green Bay-tree, lie upon Beds of Ivory, and stretch themselves upon their Couches, and eat the Lambs out of the Flock, and the Calves out of the midst of the Stall, live in Idleness, and Luxury, and Pleasure, nourishing their Hearts as in a day of slaughter, and pampering up those Lusts, which of themselves are too apt to rebel, he keeps under his Body and brings it into subjection, crucifies the old Man, that the Body of Sin may be destroyed, subdues and mortifies his Corruptions by Prayer and Fasting, and walks mournfully before the Lord of Hosts. He meets with scarce any thing in this sinful World, which can delight his Soul; but almost every Spectacle that he beholds is to him an occasion of sorrow. He grieves for his own Sins, and he grieves for those of other Men, whom he sees with so much Eagerness and Jollity posting towards the Gates of Death: He grieves for the Afflictions of Joseph, and laments to see the Church of God in Adversity. Nothing contents him, nothing pleases him in this Valley of Tears, but that he is pleased at nothing here below; but his Affections are set on those things which are above, and the earnest Desire of his Heart is to depart, and to be with Christ: Which happy End he shall at the last most certainly attain to, though it shall not be without great Pains and Difficulty, and as my Text expresses it, *scarcely*. And so I proceed to make good my second Undertaking, which was



To shew you why St. *Peter* here supposes the Righteous to be *scarcely saved*. Which word implies not an Impossibility that they should be saved (for certainly *then of all Men they would be most miserable*) nor a Possibility that any one of them should not be saved: For every one of them is as sure to obtain Salvation, as he is sure to obtain it *scarcely*. *Those that thou gavest me*, saith our Saviour, *I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the Son of Perdition*, who never was one of the Number of the Righteous. But this word *scarcely* denotes only the many and great Difficulties, and Troubles, and Dangers, through which the Righteous are to pass in their way to Heaven. They must be tempted, afflicted, scorned, derided, persecuted; They must labour, they must sweat, they must die, that they may be saved, and pass by the very Gates of Hell in their way to Paradise. There are large Mansions, and a Glorious, and Everlasting Kingdom prepared for them; but they have many potent and malicious Enemies, all which they must overcome before they can take possession of it. There is a Crown of Glory laid up for them; but they must run for it if they will obtain it. They must wage War with Devils, and *wrestle against Principalities and Powers*, before they can be accounted worthy to be Companions for Angels. And now if *David* that reposed so great a Confidence in his God, and was sufficiently assured, that he was ordained to be King over *Israel*, did nevertheless begin to despond, and was fore afraid that he should *one Day perish by the Hand of Saul*, much more may the Righteous fear and tremble, who have far greater and mightier Enemies than *Saul*, to oppose them, able to dismay  
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the stoutest Souldier in the Camp of Christ, had he not a Shield of Faith to defend him from their Weapons, and an Eye of Faith to discover, that those that are for him are more than those that are against him. When a mighty Host of the *Syrians* besieged *Elisha*, God placed *Horses and Chariots of Fire round about him* for his Defence. So though the Righteous Man hath Devils for his Enemies, yet he hath Angels for his Guardians, and Jesus Christ the Captain of his Salvation. He may march on then with Confidence and Assurance of the Victory; but he must fight, if he will obtain it. Heaven is his Inheritance, *the Kingdom prepared for him from the Foundation of the World*; but he is a Stranger and a Pilgrim here in a far Countrey, and his Journey to it is long and troublesome: He hath a narrow and rugged way to walk in, tedious and irksome to Flesh and Blood, and the Gate that must admit him into those Mansions of Glory, is exceeding strait, and he must strive hard, if he will enter in at it. Thus ye see in general, that the Righteous shall *scarcely be saved*; that is, it shall cost him much Labour, and Sweat, and Pains, to work out his Salvation; and through much Tribulation, through many and great Troubles and Afflictions, through many amazing Difficulties and affrighting Dangers, he shall at the last enter into the Kingdom of Heaven, and receive a Crown of Glory. And this will appear more plainly, if we consider distinctly these several Difficulties which he hath to encounter in his way to Heaven.

And these are, First, his own natural Corruptions. The best and holiest of Men (our Blessed Saviour only excepted) who was sanctified from

the Womb ) are all conceived and born in Sin. By one Man, saith St. Paul, Sin entred into the World; and Death by Sin, and so Death passed upon all Men, for that all have sinned, Rom. 5. 12. And this Original Sin ( as it is generally styled by Divines ) which the Righteous themselves ( even the best of God's Saints, as well as other Men ) bring into the World with them, deriving it from Adam by a wonderful, but certain, Propagation, is of a spreading and infectious Nature, as dangerous and deadly to the Soul ( if it be not carefully subdued and mortified ) as Leprosie to the Body. It is ever active and stirring, labouring and struggling continually to get the Mastery over the Soul, that so it may break out into open and actual Transgressions: And too often it doth so even in good Men, and prevails sometimes over the most pious and devoutest Christians. This was that which moved David to commit Adultery and Murder. This was that which shook the Constancy of Peter, and made him so timorously and basely to deny his Master. And this is that which causes so many Weaknesses, and Failings in all the Saints of God; so that *there is not a just Man upon Earth that doth good, and sins not*; but in every Man there is a Law in his Members, warring against the Law of his Mind, and bringing him into Captivity to the Law of Sin which is in his Members, Rom. 7. 23. In every Man, as the same Apostle speaks, Gal. 5. 17. *The Flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the Flesh: and these two are contrary the one to the other*; so that, by means of this intestine War within him, it comes to pass often times, *that he cannot do the things that he would*. Even the Heathen Philo:

Philosophers did observe and complain of (though they knew not the Cause of ) this strange Depravation of humane Nature. *Plato* tells us, that Men are by Nature wicked, and cannot be perswaded to do that which is right ; and that the two great and principal Diseases of the Soul are Ignorance and Vice. And to the same Effect *Tully* observes, that Nature is to Man a Stepmother, that brings him into the World with a naked Body, feeble and helpless, and with a Soul throughout the whole Course of his Life, sorrowful and distracted with Multiplicity of Cares and Troubles, tormented with Fears, tired with Labour, and prone to Lust, wherein the Divine Light, Wit, and good Manners are as it were overwhelmed and stifled. This sad Condition which all Mankind is in by Nature, I say, the wiser Sort even amongst the Heathen, amidst the gross Darknes of Paganism and Idolatry had some little Knowledge of, though they were utterly ignorant of the true Cause and Reason of it. And therefore they made it their chief Care and Business, by their Learning and Philosophy, according to the best of their Power to correct and amend it. But unto us Christians God hath unlocked this Secret, and hath fully discovered this great and hidden Mystery, which all the Learning of the profoundest Heathen Philosophers was not able to search out. In the lively Oracles of the Holy Scriptures he hath fully explained unto us both the Cause, and Danger, and Remedy of this Corruption of our Nature. In that Sacred Book we have it represented to us under divers Names and Characters, all of them foul and abominable like it self. This is that which ( *Rom. 7. 17.* )  
St. Paul



St. Paul calls *the Sin that dwells in us* : Because since the Fall of our First Parents it is become natural and hereditary to us, and never leaves us nor forsakes us in this World, but abides continually in our Flesh, even unto Death; whence in the same Chapter it is called, *the Evil that is present with us*, and *Hebr. 12. 1. the Sin which doth so easily beset us*; because it cleaves to us so closely, and inseparably, and with so much Force and Violence, presses and besieges all the Strength and Powers of our Soul. The word in the Original is very Elegant and Emphatical, and but once used in all the New Testament, *ἐμπεσόντις ἁμαρτία*, *the Sin which doth so easily beset us*; that Sin which doth as it were hug and embrace us, and is continually insinuating and winding it self like a Serpent into our Hearts, with a Design to deceive and beguile us. This is that which ( *ver. 15. of the same Chapter* ) is called *a Root of Bitterness springing up to trouble us*; because it is ever plentiful in producing evil Branches, and corrupt and deadly Fruit. This is that which by St. James is called, *the Lusts that war in our Members*, James 4. 1 and by St. Peter, *the fleshly Lusts which war against the Soul*, 1 Pet. 2. 11. St. Paul calls it *the old Man*, and *the Body of Sin*, Rom. 6. 6. And what the Members of that Body are, he tells us, *Coloss. 3. 5. Fornication, Uncleanness, inordinate Affection, evil Concupiscence, and Covetousness, which is Idolatry*? Thus ye see the first Difficulty that the Righteous Man hath to encounter within his way to Heaven, which renders that way so troublesome to him, that notwithstanding all his Courage and Resolution, he cannot walk in it without great Pains and Labour. He carries a most unwelcome



welcome and heavy Clog about him, from which he cannot possibly disengage himself, which continually pulls him back, and hinders and retards his Soul in its Flight towards those glorious Mansions of Joy and Happiness, towards which it doth so eagerly press forward. And had he no other Enemies but this one to vanquish, even this alone might be sufficient to satisfy us, that he shall *scarcely be saved*; since it is most certain that he never shall be saved at all, except he do overcome this first Enemy of his Salvation, which of all others is the most formidable. One deceitful *Dalilah* was worse to *Samson*, than all the Philistines: and this one innate, intestine Foe of ours, which lies continually in our Bosom, is more dangerous to us than either the World or the Devil, both which join their Forces together, with this, to bring us to Destruction: And could we (as we have all solemnly promised, and engaged to do in our Baptismal Vow,) renounce all the sinful Lusts of the Flesh, we might easily renounce also the Devil, and all his Works, and the Poms and Vanities of this wicked World.

But still to render the Righteous Man's Task harder, and his way to Heaven more rugged and difficult, he hath besides this Enemy within him (his own original Corruptions) two Enemies more without to engage with, the World, and the Devil. First, The World, which with all its Poms and Vanities, its gilded Baits, and deceitful Enticements allures and invites him to set his Heart and Affections wholly upon these worthless Toyes and Trifles here below. With all the specious Promises of Pleasure, Riches, Honour, and what not? It seeks to alienate and estrange his Thoughts from  
God

God, from his native Country, from the Heavenly Canaan, that *Jerusalem, which is above, the Mother of us all*; and to perswade him to set up his staff here in this Vale of Tears, where he is but a stranger and a Pilgrim; and, like the Children of *Reuben* and *Gad*, to content himself with an inheritance on this side *Jordan*; for the Transitory and perishing enjoyments of this present Life, to exclude himself out of the Kingdom of Heaven, and to lose the eternal Glory and Happyness of the Saints in light. This World is a Shop, an inexhaustible Magazine of Temptations suitable and correspondent to the Constitution and desires of all the Sons and Daughters of *Adam*. Here then the Righteous Man, the constant and faithful Souldier and Champion of Jesus Christ, is again, fiercely assaulted in his way to Heaven by this second Adversary the World. Here he meets with every thing that can gratifie the most carnal and sensual Appetite. Which way soever he stands most inclined (and some way or other that natural Corruption, wherein all Men are conceived and born, will be apt more or less, to sway him) he shall be sure to have a Bait fitted to his Humour. Whatsoever it be that is most likely to seduce, and intice him into the Snares of Sin, the World is amply stored with all things, and is ever ready to furnish him: so that it highly concerns him to stand continually upon his guard praying always that God would *turn away his Eyes from beholding Vanity, and quicken him in his way*; that he may so pass through things Temporal, that he finally lose not the things Eternal.

But further yet; besides these two Enemies of his Salvation, his own flesh, and the World he hath  
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still another that is indefatigable in plotting, and contriving his Destruction; and that is the Devil, whose business it is continually *like a roaring Lion to walk to and fro in the earth seeking whom he may devour*. This is the great and chief Enemy of Mankind, to whose accursed designs the other two are fatally helpful, and subservient. It was he that beguiled our first Parents in the state of Innocence, and by that Means plunged both them, and all their posterity into a state of Sin, and Corruption. And now he makes use of that advantage he hath gained over us: he joyns against us, together with our lusts; and when they seek to draw us away to any thing that is evil, he is ever ready to back and strengthen their Temptations with his own *secret whispers, and suggestions*. *When the World offers any thing to us that is pleasant and inviting*, he is ready to set a fresh gloss upon it, that may render its Charms more prevalent. He leaves no Stone unturned, no project, nor Design unattempted, by which he may bring us into the Bondage and Slavery of Sin. His Power is great, his Industry unwearied and his Malice implacable against all the Sons of Men: and by how much the more vigilant and careful, the Person against whom he bends his Force, is to stand upon his Guard, and to defend himself against his Assaults and Stratagems, so much the fiercer are his Onsets so much the more violent and outrageous is his Fury. So that above all others the Righteous Man, that constantly withstands and resists his Wiles hath the hardest Task to perform. Other Persons that easily yield to his Temptations, he may safely leave to themselves. He knows that they have an Enemy within them, that will be sure to be  
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be their Ruin; that their own Lusts will be sufficient to prevail against them; and that they themselves, without his help, will work out their own Damnation. But where he meets with Opposition, there he doubles his Diligence, and uses all the Means that Power, or Policy, or Malice can suggest to him in order to the effecting of his Designs. No sooner hath the Man of God overcome one Temptation, but he presently sets upon him with another: No sooner hath *the Shield of Faith quenched* one of his *fiery Darts*, but it is again assaulted with a second. We read, that he dealt thus with our Blessed Saviour himself. Three several Attempts he made upon him and would not leave him, until he found that he was indeed the Son of God, and that it was utterly in vain for him to hope to prevail against him by any of his Temptations. And surely, if he had so much impudence as not to leave Christ our Head before the third Assault, he will much more hardly suffer *a repulse from any of his Members*. Thus ye see how great opposition the Righteous Man is sure to meet with, and with what cruel and dangerous Enemies he is daily to fight, during the time of his Sojourning here upon Earth. And by this Means it comes to pass that he is *scarcely saved*; so *scarcely*, that if the incessant importunities of his own corruptions, the sweet and alluring Baits and Temptations of the World; and all the restless Malice, and Power, and Policy of Hell could prevail against him, he should certainly be damned. All these Adversaries must be subdued by him, before he can be esteemed worthy through the merits of Christ, *to receive a crown of Life*. Yea, and besides all this, I might proceed further and



and shew you that as to outward Appearance, and in the Opinion of Men, even God himself, sometimes seems to be his Enemy here in this World; forasmuch as he often laies upon him heavy and great Afflictions for the Trial of his Patience and Faith. His Portion in this Life is, Sorrow, Persecution, taking up the Cross and suffering for Righteousness sake. All these things are entailed upon every true Disciple of Christ, and he must expect to have his share, more or less, of every one of them *while the wicked are in great Power, and spread themselves like a green Bay-tree,* while they enjoy the world at will, and live in Ease and Plenty and Prosperity, *the Righteous are killed all the day long, and accounted as sheep for the Slaughter.* This was our blessed Saviour's own Condition here upon Earth. All his whole Life was but one continued scene of sufferings; and even from his Mother's Womb to his Death he was all along a *Man of Sorrows, and acquainted with grief.* When he first came into the World, he came in a very Mean, and despicable Condition, so poorly provided for, that he had not so much as a House wherein he might *lay his Head*, nor a cradle wherein he might rest; but was forced to be content with a Stable for the one, and a Manger for the other. And all the rest of his Life was answerable to this Mean beginning. He was continually affronted, and abused, and persecuted by the Chief Priests, and Scribes, and Pharisees, and by almost all Men, with whom he conversed: and after all this he was most perfidiously betrayed by one of his own Disciples, denied by another of them, and forsaken by all the rest and at the last most barbarously murdered by bloody  
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and sinful Men. And if God dealt thus hardly with his only begotten Son *in whom he was ever well-pleased*, it would be unreasonable for his Disciples and Followers to expect to fare so much better than their Lord, as to be wholly exempted from Afflictions in this Life. If the Captain of our Salvation was not made perfect but through sufferings; surely, then we shall not enter into the Kingdom of Heaven, except we drink more or less of the same Cup. This our blessed Lord hath assured us shall be the Portion of all that will follow him, *Luke 14. 26, 27. If any Man come to me and hate not his Father, and Mother, and Wife, and Children, and Brethren, and Sisters, yea and his own Life also, he cannot be my Disciple. And whosoever doth not bear his Cross and come after me, cannot be my Disciple.* And *In the World ye shall have Tribulation,* *John 16. 33.* And this the holy Apostles afterwards found true by their own Experience. They were all hated, and maligned, and persecuted whithersoever they went, and not one of them died a natural Death, but S. *John* the Disciple whom our Saviour seemed to love above the rest, and perhaps was therefore pleased to exempt him from suffering a violent Death, as the other did. And thus it fared afterwards with their Successours the Bishops and Pastours of the primitive Church: yea and not only with them, but with the greatest part of their Flock too. Every one that was known to profess the Faith of Christ was persecuted as a Traytour; and to be a Christian was to be a capital Offender. And though at present by the blessing of God, the Light of the Gospel shines amongst us gloriously; yet even amongst Christians themselves those few rare Examples of Piety, those Persons that

that are extraordinarily strict, and careful, to live answerable to their Profession, *in all Holy Conversation and Godliness*, are generally hated, and scorned, and looked upon with an evil Eye, and suffer more Sorrow and Affliction in the World than other Men. And now I have given you an Account of all those dangerous Enemies, and those manifold and great Difficulties and Troubles, which the Righteous Man hath to overcome in his way to Heaven. And from what I have said, it is sufficiently evident, that he shall *scarcely be saved*: that is, it shall cost him great pains, and striving to *work out his Salvation*, and through much Tribulation he shall enter into the Kingdom of God.

And if the Righteous be thus *scarcely saved*; I need not insist much upon the other Proposition, nor spend many words to shew you that the wicked *the ungodly and the sinner* shall most certainly be damned. For this follows from the former Doctrine by an undeniable consequence: and therefore the Apostle takes it for granted, appeals to your own Judgment, and leaves it to your selves to determine the question in the words of my Text; *If the Righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the Ungodly and the Sinner appear?* If the Righteous that hath undergone so many Troubles, hath taken so much pains to subdue and mortifie his Lusts, hath with so much Constancy and Resolution turned away his Eyes and his Heart from the bewitching Baits and ensnaring Poms and Vanities of this sinful World, hath with so much Courage and Faith resisted the Temptations of Satan, and *quenched all the fiery Darts of the Wicked*, hath with so much Patience and Meekness borne his Cross, and endured the Afflictions and sufferings of this present

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Life,

Life, is after all these painful and glorious Performances, even when he hath gained a full and compleat Victory over all his Spiritual Enemies, and is a Triumphant Conquerour over Principalities and Powers, still but an unprofitable Servant, and dares not appear before God's Tribunal, trusting in his own Righteousness, but *in that which is through the Faith of Christ, the Righteousness which is of God by Faith*, how then shall the Ungodly and the Sinner, that hath taken no pains at all, to *fight the good Fight of Faith*, that hath let loose the Reins to his Lusts, that hath yielded himself a Slave to his Passions, that hath put God out of all his Thoughts, hath set his Heart and Affections wholly upon the things which are on Earth, and glutted himself with sensual Pleasures, hath harkned to the wicked suggestions of the Devil, *hath walked according to the Course of this World, according to the Prince of the Power of the Air, the Spirit that works in the Children of Disobedience*, hath enjoyed his good things in this Life, and hath not *come in to trouble like other Men*, be able to stand before the Righteous Judge of all the Earth, when he shall be summoned to give an account of all his Actions done in the flesh. The case is plain: he shall not be able to stand at all; but shall be overwhelmed with everlasting Confusion, and Misery and Despair. *The Ungodly, saith the Psalmist, shall not stand in the Judgment, nor Sinners in the Congregation of the Righteous: For the Lord knoweth the way of the Righteous, but the way of the Ungodly shall perish, Psal. 1. 5, 6.*

If then we desire to stand in that great Day, and to lift up our Heads with joy at the coming of our Saviour, let us resolve and labour with all our  
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Might, now to stand and fight the Lords Battles Manfully against all the Enemies of our Souls. Ye see in what Circumstances we are, how great Opposition every faithful Champion of Jesus Christ is like to meet with in this troublesome Wilderness, before he can arrive at his heavenly *Canaan*. But though the difficulties which threaten us be great, yet they are not insuperable; but we may by the Assistance of God's holy Spirit ( who is ready to help our Infirmities ) overcome them if we will. Let not any thing then discourage nor affright us from our perseverance in well-doing: but let us animate our selves by the Example of the blessed Apostles and Martyrs and Confessours to *run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus the Authour and finisher of our Faith, who for the joy that was set before him, endured the Cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the Right-hand of the Throne of God. Let us consider him that endured such Contradiction of Sinners against himself; lest we be wearied and faint in our Minds.* So God will certainly give a blessing to our endeavours: his Grace will be ever ready to prevent, assist, and further us in all our Actions here; and his Bounty will not fail to crown us with Glory, and Honour, and Immortality hereafter.

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## S E R M O N XII.

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1 C O R. X. 12.

*Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall.*

**O**F all those manifold and subtile Stratagems, with which the great Enemy of our Salvation seeks to beguile us of our Everlasting Inheritance, there is none more dangerous, than that by which he endeavours to perswade us, that we have already attained to such a Measure of Perfection that we are fully ripe for Heaven, and that our Faith is so strong, that it is able to *quench all the fiery darts of the wicked*, to baffle the strongest Temptation with which it can be assaulted, and to stand invincible, even unto the End, against all the Force and Policy of the Powers of Darkness. This Temptation had prevailed so far among the *Corinthians*, that many of them were so puffed up with the conceit they had of that great proficiency, they had made in the School of Christ, and of that knowledge they had gained in the Mysteries of the Gospel, under so excellent a Tutor as *S. Paul*, that they thought that now they had done their work, and that they were past all danger



ger of falling away from Christ. And particularly upon the Notion they had entertained of Christian Liberty, they ventured upon some Actions, which though they might perhaps in some Cases be in themselves lawful; yet upon the Account that they gave offence to weaker brethren, they could not be practised by them without breach of Charity, and were therefore by this Circumstance rendered sinful and hurtful to their own Souls. One of which practices was their eating of things offer'd to Idols: which though the Apostle seems to grant to be a thing indifferent to them that have knowledge to discern, that an Idol is *nothing in the World, and that meat commendeth us not to God*: but that *if we eat we are not the better; neither if we eat not are we the worse*: yet he advises them to *take heed least by any means this liberty of theirs become a Stumbling block to them that are weak, least through their knowledge the weak brother perish for whom Christ died*. Therefore from this abuse of their Christian Liberty and from that too confident Opinion of that knowledge and Faith which God had bestowed upon them, he labours to reclaim them in severall Chapters of this Epistle. And this he doth first by propounding to them his own Example, shewing them, that as to the point of Christian Liberty he was so tender of the Salvation of all Men, that he very frequently abridged himself of that Liberty which otherwise he might have used, and that he *became all things to all Men, that he might by all means save some*; and *that he would eat no flesh while the World stands, rather than by so doing to make his brother to offend*. And as for being puffed up with the consideration of

the manifold Graces which God had bestowed upon him he declares that he was so far from it that instead of that he still called to mind the length of that race which he had to run before he could obtain the Prize; least he should faint and come short of it; and the strength of those Enemies which he had to overcome; least by his carelessness and security he should give them an occasion to get an advantage over him. *I therefore so run, saith he, not as uncertainly; so fight I, not as one that beateth the Air: but I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: least that by any Means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a Cast-away,* Chap. 9. 26, 27. And lest his own Example should not be sufficient to dissuade them from this Spiritual Pride, he propounds to them in the second Place the Example of the Children of *Israel*, in the beginning of this tenth Chapter unto my Text. God had bestowed most extraordinary Graces and Favours upon that People, and yet upon their abuse of them he was so highly displeased at them, that he destroyed them all in the Wilderness, but two; and not one of those Persons that came out of *Egypt* entered into the Land of Promise, but only *Caleb* and *Joshua*. *Now these things, saith he, were our Examples, to the intent we should not lust after evil things, as they also lusted.* They who had received great Grace under the Law, by their abuse of it came short of their earthly *Canaan*, and we who have received far greater Grace under the Gospel, may by our abuse of it come short likewise of our heavenly one. *Wherefore let him that thinketh, &c.*

In the handling of which words I shall do these three Things. 1. I shall shew you, that they who think they stand, nay, that do stand, (*i. e.*) are for the present true Believers, may nevertheless depart from the Faith, and fall from Grace. 2. That it is every Man's Duty to take heed lest he do so fall. 3. I shall give you some necessary Rules and Directions to be observed by all that will take heed that they do not so fall.

*First*, I say that true Believers may depart from the Faith, and fall from Grace. And here by true Believers, I mean not the Elect : For altho' even they also may fall for a time ; yet it is certain that they shall rise again ( for as much as God's Election ever supposes and includes final Perseverance ) whereas the other, though they be for the present regenerate and true Believers, ( though not Elect ) may fall from Grace, not only totally, but finally, so as never to rise again by Repentance. And this, as it is the express Doctrine of our Church, which declares in her sixteenth Article, *That after we have received the Holy Ghost, we may depart from Grace given, and fall into Sin*, so it is most agreeable also to the Doctrine of the Holy Scriptures, as will appear by these following Instances. 1. It is plain from our Saviour's Parable, *Matth.* 18. of the Servant unto whom his Lord upon his humble Supplication, freely forgave that vast Debt of ten thousand Talents, which he was in no wise able to pay, by which is meant God's pardoning and justifying of a Sinner upon his true Repentance : As therefore, that Servant forfeited his Lord's Favour again by his Cruelty to his Fellow-servant, so like-

wife may he that is at the present regenerate and reconciled unto God, fall again into a State of Damnation. 2. There is nothing more plain than this from those Passages, Ezek. 18. 24. & 33. 12. *When the Righteous turneth away from his Righteousness, and committeth Iniquity, and doth according to all the Abominations, that the wicked Man doth, shall he live? All his Righteousness that he hath done shall not be mentioned: in his Trespass that he hath trespassed, and in his Sin that he hath sinned, in them shall he die.* Again, *The Righteousness of the Righteous shall not deliver him in the Day of his Transgression; as for the Wickedness of the Wicked, he shall not fall thereby in the Day that he turneth from his Wickedness; neither shall the Righteous be able to live for his Righteousness in the Day that he sinneth.* Without all Controversie by the Righteous in these Places is meant, one who is truly and indeed righteous and just in the sight of God; as appears by the Description which he gives of him from the 5th Verse of this 18th Chapter of *Ezekiel* unto the 10th, where he expressly declares him to be *one that hath walked in his Statutes, and hath kept his Judgments to deal truly.* For if we should understand it otherwise, viz. of one that was only outwardly and hypocritically Righteous, these Texts would be down-right Non-sense, and must mean this (which is indeed nothing) *When the Righteous (i.e. the Hypocrite) turneth away from his Righteousness, (i.e. his Hypocrisie) he shall die.* Certainly God would never threaten to punish any Soul with Death for turning away from Hypocrisie; neither would he oppose Hypocrisie to Iniquity, as a thing contra-



ry to it, when he hath so frequently declared in his word, that Hypocrisie it self is most gross Iniquity, such as his Soul abhors. Since therefore we cannot suppose God here to speak of Counterfeit and Hypocritical Righteousness, it must needs follow from these Texts of Scripture, That he who was once truly Righteous may turn from such Righteousness, and commit Iniquity, may fall from Grace into a State of Damnation, and that he may continue in such a State, and die in his Sins. Again, *Thirdly*, This is evident from our Saviour's Parable, *John 15. 1, 2. I am the true Vine, and my Father is the Husbandman. Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away.* Now no Man can ever be a Branch of this Heavenly Vine ( which is Jesus Christ ) but by a true Faith: And yet our Saviour declares here, that such a Branch as this, that was once in him, may cease to bear Fruit, and thereupon be taken away; such a Man may depart from the Faith, and fall from Christ. *Fourthly*, This is clear from that Passage, *2 Pet. 2. 20. If after they have escaped the Pollutions of the World, through the Knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again intangled therein, and overcome, the latter End is worse with them than the beginning. For it had been better for them not to have known the way of Righteousness, than after they have known it, to turn from the Holy Commandment delivered unto them; unto which Place, that of Hebrews 6. 4, 5, 6. is parallel.* From both which Places it appears, that *they who were once enlightened, and had tasted of the Heavenly Gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, and had ta-*  
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*sted the good Word of God, and the Powers of the World to come ; that they who have escaped the Pollutions of the World, through the Knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ, ( i. e. ) by a true Faith in him ( for none but such can enable any Man to escape those Pollutions ) may notwithstanding all this fall away, ay, and fall so too, that it shall be impossible to renew them again unto Repentance. I might produce many more Texts of Scripture for the Confirmation of this Doctrine : But I shall content my self with those, which I have already cited ; and for the further Proof of it, I shall insist upon some few Examples of holy and just Men in Scripture who have fallen from Grace ; which certainly were recorded on purpose to teach us this excellent Lesson here in my Text, that *he that thinks he stands may take heed lest he fall.* And here I shall omit the Case of the fallen Angels who were once Holy, but *kept not their first Estate*, and the Case of our First Parents, who though they were created by God in his own Image, in Righteousness and Holiness, yet quickly fell from that happy Condition into a State of Sin and Misery. But the Examples I shall insist upon shall be these. 1. *Saul*, who certainly at the first was a pious and good King, though afterwards he became quite otherwise, and was finally rejected of God for his Disobedience. The Adversaries to this Doctrine object, that *Saul* never was really good, nor endued with true Grace. But for all that, the Story tells us plainly, that the Spirit of the Lord came upon *Saul*, and rested upon him while he behaved himself well ; and that afterwards he departed from him, and an evil*

evil Spirit from the Lord troubled him. And certainly unto whomsoever the blessed Spirit of God vouchsafes to come, Grace, and true Grace too, must needs come along with him, who is the Fountain and Authour of it, and if ever he departs (though but for a season,) Grace can never stay behind him. They therefore, that deny, that *Saul* had once true Grace, may with as good reason deny, that the Man in the Parable, *Matth. 25.* that received but one Talent, ever had a true Talent: and then he had very hard measure to be condemned for not putting it to the Exchangers, when he had received nothing but false Coyn. But if this Example be not satisfactory, perhaps the next may, and that shall be that of *David*, who the Scripture tells us, was a Man after God's own Heart; and there is no Man but will readily acknowledge that God had bestowed upon him an extraordinary Measure of Grace. And yet by those two grievous Sins of Adultery, and Murder, he fell from this Grace, and continued in a state of Sin, and damnation, for the space of many Months together and never thought of Repentance, until he was restored again by the Ministry of the Prophet *Nathan*. *St. Paul* tells us expressly, that *Adulterers shall not inherit the Kingdom of God*, 1. Cor. 6. 9. And *S. John* saith, that *no Murderer hath Eternal Life abiding in him*, 1 John 3. 15. It is manifest therefore that by these Sins, *David* did fall from Grace, and had he died without Repentance must have perished Eternally. I might instance further in *Solomon*, who was once beloved of the Lord, and yet in his old Age became an Idolater; in *S. Peter* who denied his Saviour;

viour ; in *Demas*, who was once one of the fellow-labourers with *S. Paul*, and perhaps one of those he means, *Phil. 4. 3. whose Names were in the Book of Life* ; yet he forsook *S. Paul*, having loved *this present World*, *2 Tim. 4. 10* : but by what I have said already, it is sufficiently evident, from Scripture, that true believers may depart from the Faith, and fall from Grace. I shall instance only in one thing more, to shew that this is agreeable to the Doctrine of our Church. In the Rubrick after the Order of publick Baptism of Infants, the Church tells us, that it is certain by God's Word, that Children which are baptized, dying before they commit actual Sin, are undoubtedly saved. Now it is as certain, by God's Word, that no Man can be saved but by Grace : and then it follows on the one hand, that all Infants in their baptism do receive Grace ; or else by virtue of their baptism, without it, they cannot be saved : and it follows likewise on the other hand, that they that have received grace may fall from it, or else no Children, that have been baptized, can be damned ; which no Man living will admit of. It is manifest therefore that they that have Grace may fall away from it. And if so, then certainly it is every Mans Duty to take heed lest he do so fall.

And this is the second thing I propounded to speak of. *Let him that thinks he stands take heed lest he fall.* To fall, let it be in what manner it will, always implies danger and mischief : but to fall from Grace is the most dangerous and dreadful fall imaginable. It is a fall from Christ, a fall from God, a fall from Salvation, a fall, like  
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that of *Lucifer*, from the highest Heavens into the bottomless Pit, a fall from the Glory, and Light, and Happiness of the bright Sons of the Morning into the Eternal Confusion, and Horror and Misery of the Children of Perdition. Of all the rich Jewels which God hath to bestow upon us, there is none so precious as that of Grace: For upon whomsoever he bestows this, upon him he designs to bestow Heaven it self, Grace being the only sure and certain Guide to conduct us to those blessed Mansions of Everlasting Glory. Without this we are able of our selves to do nothing at all that is good; we cannot walk one step in the way of Life; we cannot do a good Action, nor think a good Thought, except the Holy Spirit of God enable us, *Who works in us both to will, and to do of his good Pleasure.* The Enemies of our Salvation are both numerous and powerful, and the very weakest of them will be sure to be too strong for us, if we be not assisted from on high: *For we wrestle not against Flesh and Blood, but against Principalities, against Powers, against the Rulers of the Darknes of this World, against Spiritual Wickedness in high Places,* against such Adversaries as (if they were not restrained by the Omnipotent Power of God) would quickly destroy the whole Race of Man, and cause Confusion and Desolation throughout all the Earth. How doth it behove us therefore, that we may be able to overcome them, to take unto us the whole Armour of God; the Girdle of Truth, the Breast-plate of Righteousness, the Shield of Faith, the Helmet of Salvation, and the Sword of the Spirit? It is Grace alone that  
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can furnish us with these Weapons: And so long as we are thus armed we may assure our selves, that the Gates of Hell shall never be able to prevail against us. But if once we fall from Grace, and thereby disarm our selves of all this Spiritual Armour, how can we expect then to fight the Lord's Battels, when we have cast away the Weapons of our Warfare. That roaring Lion that seeks to devour us, and dares venture to assault us when we are armed *Cap a pe*, with the Armour of Heaven, though he dreads a Wound from the Sword of the Spirit, and knows that the Shield of Faith is impregnable against all his fiery Darts, will easily make a Prey of a naked and defenceless Soul, a Soul that hath forsaken God, and is therefore forsaken of him, and delivered into the Hands of the Enemy, to be *taken Captive by him at his Will*. Let us take heed then, lest having begun in the Spirit we end in the Flesh; lest having once *run well* we turn aside, *and leave the Paths of Uprightness, to walk in the ways of Darknes*; lest having for some time fought manfully under Christ's Banner the good Fight of Faith, we afterwards grow weary and faint, desert our Colours, make shipwreck of our Faith, and forsake the Captain of our Salvation. *Let him that thinks he stands, take heed lest he fall*. And so I come to the last thing I undertook to do in handling these words, which is

To give you some necessary Rules and Directions to be observed by all that will take heed that they do not so fall. First, then, that we may take heed that we do not fall, let us remember that we may fall. As there is a possibility for him that



that is already fallen to rise again; for him that is at the present defiled with the pollutions of Sin to be washed again, and sanctified, and cleansed from those Pollutions; for him that is at the present *in the Gall of Bitterness, and in the Bond of Iniquity*, entangled in the snare of Satan, to be *delivered from that Bondage into the Glorious Liberty of the Children of God*; and therefore we ought not to despair of the Salvation of any Man: so likewise there is a possibility for him that for the present runs well the good race that is set before him to faint before he comes to the End of it and by so doing to lose his Prize; for him that for a *while believed in time of Temptation, when tribulation or persecution arises because of the word to be offended and fall away*; for him who had once escaped the Pollutions of the World through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, to be again entangled therein and overcome; *insomuch that his latter end shall be worse than the beginning*: and therefore no Man ought to be over confident, and secure, of his final Perseverance, nor to presume that because at the present, upon a strict Examination of his Conscience, and of the Condition of his Soul, he finds that he is in a State of Grace, that that State is unalterable and that he shall infallibly continue in it unto his life's end: for he that thinks he stands may fall. And of what a dangerous Consequence such a presumption is we may see by the Example of S. Peter, and indeed of all the rest of our Saviour's Disciples: for as they all joyned with S. Peter in that good Resolution of never forsaking Christ (for Peter said unto him, *Though I should die with thee yet will I not deny thee.* Likewise also said all the Disci-

*Disciples*) so they did all of them in effect joyn with him also in the denial of him, for *S. Matthew* tells us, that *they all forsook him and fled*. But *S. Peter* that was the most confident of all denies him the most shamefully and basely of all, with Oaths and Curses, swearing that he knew him not. Thus dangerous was Presumption to that great Saint, and it will be as dangerous to every one of us, if we entertain it in our Hearts. He that thinks he stands so firm that he can never fall, 'tis much to be feared that he is fallen already, and fallen so low, that he is in danger never to rise again; except it be by some extraordinary Act of Mercy, such as our Saviour shewed to *S. Peter*, when *he turned and looked upon him* after his fall, and by that look infused new Grace into his Heart, which immediately burst out at his Eyes, in tears of repentance. Let us not therefore be high minded, but let us fear: for *happy is the Man that feareth alway: but he that hardneth his heart shall fall into mischief*, Proverbs 28. 14.

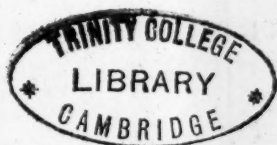
Secondly, if we will take heed that we fall not from Grace, let us take heed that we fall not into Sin, especially into presumptuous and willful Sin, against the light of our conscience. All Sin whatsoever, though it be but a Sin of Ignorance, or Infirmitie, tends more or less (if it be not speedily repented of) to the impairing, and diminishing of the Grace of God in our Hearts; which is bestowed upon us on purpose to preserve, and defend us from the power of Sin, that *it may not Reign in our mortal Bodies, that we should obey it in the lusts thereof*. But Sins of Presumption and Willfulness against our knowledge, and the checks of our conscience, do not only much impair Grace, but they  
totally

totally extinguish it, and bring us into great danger of final Apostacy. For there can be no fellowship betwixt Righteousness and Unrighteousness, no Communion betwixt Light and Darkness, no Concord betwixt Christ and Belial, no Agreement nor Cohabitation of the Spirit of God and Satan. And therefore *David* prays most earnestly against such Sins as these, Psal. 19. 13. *Keep back thy Servant from presumptuous Sins: let them not have dominion over me: then shall I be upright, and I shall be innocent from the great Transgression.* And how deadly a wound such Sins make in the conscience, God for our instruction ( that his example might be a warning to us to beware of the like Sins ) suffered him to find by a sad Experience. That premeditated wilful Murder of one of his innocent subjects changed the Man after God's own Heart into one after the Heart of him who *was a murderer from the beginning*, and made him such an one as Satan would have all Men to be, if he could prevail. It is impossible while he was in this Condition, that he should find any comfort in the performance of his Devotions, if he did then perform any at all. His Hand, his Tongue, his Heart were all out of tune, all unfit for the Celebration of God's Praises in which they were wont continually to be employed. Even his own sacred Hymns, and Anthems were nauseous to him, and *the sweet Psalmist of Israel* was become a stranger to the songs of *Sion*. Grace was then lost, and Sin reigned in him; the Spirit of God had for that Time forsaken him, and Satan had taken Possession of his Soul. Let us take heed then of presumptuous and wilful Sins ( and every habitual

Sin is a step towards them, they wrought a sad change in *David*; but they may work a worse in us. God was pleased to raise him again: but if we fall after the same manner, he may perhaps deny the same Favour to us, and then our Case is irrecoverable.

*Thirdly*, If we will take heed that we fall not from Grace, let us endeavour daily to grow in it, and improve it. So *S. Peter* exhorts us, in the end of his Second Epistle. *Ye therefore beloved seeing ye know these things before, beware lest ye also being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own steadfastness. But grow in Grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord, and Saviour Jesus Christ.* He that thinks he hath Grace enough already hath indeed very little, or none at all: but *blessed are they that hunger and thirst after Righteousness; for they shall be filled. The path of the just, saith Solomon, is as the shining Light, that shineth more, and more unto the perfect Day, Prov. 4. 18.* And our blessed Saviour compares the Kingdom of Heaven ( by which is meant the Grace of God in our Hearts ) unto a grain of mustard seed, which though it be less than all the seeds that be in the earth, yet when it is sown, it grows up, and becomes a tree. So likewise should the Grace of God grow, and increase, in our Hearts, and so it will do, if it be not ( purely by our own fault ) hindered and stifled. That we may not therefore fall from Grace, let us be careful to improve that Grace which God hath already bestowed upon us, by waiting upon him duly, and constantly in all those Ordinances, which he hath appointed for the begetting, preserving, and increasing it in our Souls :

Souls: such as are diligent Reading and Meditating in his Word at home, hearing it preached and expounded in his House, frequent receiving the Holy Sacrament, and praying unto God continually both in private and publick as our Church teaches us, *that his Grace may always prevent and follow us; and make us continually to be given to all good Works.* He that doth these things in Truth and sincerity shall never fall; God will never leave nor forsake such a Man, but will be sure to *guide him with his Counsel here, and afterward receive him to Glory.*




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